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MEN OF CHARACTER.

BY

DOUGLAS JERROLD.

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PREFACE.

The greater number of these Characters—or, rather, Sketches of Character—originally appeared some sixteen years ago. The incidents of each paper make no pretension to the construction of a complete story: they are rather presented as an endeavour—often, too, a hardy, extravagant one—to illustrate certain moral and personal peculiarities of the heroes (heroes of fewest inches!) with little regard to the elaborate working out of the likeness. Indeed, Men of Character are little other than Men of Outlines; pen-and-ink flourishes; with, possibly, now and then some better trace of human similitude, and now, running into mere grotesque.

Thus, Job Pippins is nothing more than the hero of accident. The plaything, and, finally, the prosperous man of worldly chance. Are there such men? Different readers may haply make different answers. With the writer, however, Job is somewhat of a favourite; from the circumstance that whatever good spirits may be found in him, the sunshine was not reflected from the actual hour of his pen-and-ink parent.

When Jack Runnymede first appeared, certain social evils and abuses, of which he is made the hero and the sufferer, were in hourly operation. They have passed away; made the pleasant

sacrifices to a better time, informed with a more humanising spirit. Thus, as says *Orion*—

"The circle widens as the world spins round."

The incidents of Jack's sailor life—with the characters that beset it—are little, very little coloured. And now most of them belong to the past. Englishmen are no more likely again to experience the horrors of the Tower Tender, than the doings of the Argonauts.

Adam Buff may haply have descendants: men with a sort of topsy-turvy prosperity, that, by the turn of accident, transforms the naked necessities of their condition, into their self-denying and rewarded virtues.

A Matthew Clear may continue to see his way; though —so have we proceeded in the work of pulling down and casting aside—there is no longer a pillory, in which the culprit is framed for an example to the lookers-on; the admonished beholders taking supplementary law into their own hands, as gathered from the gutter and the dust-bin.

John Applejohn, at the present time, would hardly need to sit upon the stone step of a stony sponging-house, awaiting the advent of a messenger sent "to search the books." It might, too, be most difficult—even impossible—for John, in 1851, to fall into the hilarious company of lords and gentlemen bound together to break the peace: yet, when John was in his literary growth, such nobles and gentry were in the flesh, and—in the newspapers.

Finally—for it needs not to run through the file—Barnaby Palms is confessed to be a sad, mean rascal. But let him not be thought a mere knavery of fiction: an unreal villain curdled from the sourness of invention.

In the treatment of some of the subjects of this volume there

may be found occasional roughness of thought; but the writer would fain hope not altogether unaccompanied by something better carried along with it.

Happy the writer if in his conduct of these pages he may liken himself to nothing higher than Plutarch's hedgehog. What says the grand old writer in his enquiry, "*Which are the most crafty, water animals, or those that breed in the sea?*" He says—and for the prettiness of the matter it is much that it is said upon his own testimony—

"The provision which the hedgehogs make for their young ones is much more ingenious. For when autumn comes, they creep under the vines, and shake off the grapes with their feet; which done, they roll themselves up and down, and take them up into their prickles, so that when they creep away again, you would think it a walking cluster (and this we have looked on, and seen them do)! after which, returning to their holes, they lay themselves down for their young ones to feed upon."

Thus, if the book have its prickles, I trust it may also have some little fruit; if there be found hedgehogs in the pages, I hope it will be seen that here and there the hedgehogs are not without a grape.

D. J.

West Lodge, Putney Lower Common
November 18, 1851.

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MEN OF CHARACTER.

JOB PIPPINS;

THE MAN WHO "COULDN'T HELP IT."

CHAPTER I.

Put away temptation from the heart, eyes, ears, and fingers of Job Pippins, and behold in him a model of self-government. Born an Esquimaux, we can answer for him, he had never yearned for grape-juice—blind, carnal beauty had never betrayed him—stone-deaf, he had given no ear to bland seductions—rich as a nabob, we are convinced he had never wished to pick a pocket. Superficial thinkers may call this negative goodness. Very well. Will they, at the same time, tell us how many men of character in this world of contradiction are made up of mere negatives?

Here, Jenny, take away this foul black ink, vile compound of gall and acid, and bring us a honeycomb. And, Jenny, dear, relieve us of this last small handiwork of old Mulciber (that he who wrought mail for Achilles should now nib pens for stockbrokers!) and give us a feather, dropt from the wing of your pet ringdove. So; we are in a charitable mood; our heart opens—our sympathies begin to flow. We will indite the apologetic history of Job Pippins. Yes; it shall be to us a labour of love to turn ebony into ivory.

At one-and-twenty Job Pippins being his own master, had little restraint to complain of. In truth, no mortal could be more indulgent to himself; no man more readily forgive. more speedily forget, the faults and follies of his own flesh. Sorry are we to say, the benevolent example was entirely lost upon the

world about him: for the first important incident of Job's life will show how, in the very fulness of his hopes, he was driven from his native town—slander, like a mortal snake, hissing at his exiled heels. At once to begin our domestic tragedy of humble life.

Sir Scipio Mannikin was the pearl of men. The purity of three maiden aunts was incarnated in a masculine tabernacle. Yes; in Sir Scipio a leash of spinsters lived again. Should sceptics doubt, let them read the printed wisdom of Mannikin at Quarter Sessions, and acknowledge the metempsychosis. Briefly; the most remarkable difference between the knight and any of the three immaculate maidens may be defined in one short word —shaving. Happy had it been for Job, had Sir Scipio shared in the same contempt of the operation with his lamented female relations!

Profoundly certain are we of the happiness—the calm, the complete joy—of the young Lady Scipio Mannikin. How could it be otherwise? Thirty years younger than her husband, she could gather, in the spring of life, the golden fruits of autumn. Was she too vivacious?—Her wild sallies were checked and guided by the monitor of experience. Was her heart ever and anon about to run from her mouth?—A look from Sir Scipio would freeze it at her lip. Did she talk idly of the beauties of this world?—Her moralising spouse would convince her that, saving his own estate and his own person, the whole earth was but one large dunghill, and the men and women miserable worms wriggling within it. Thus mated, we hear the silver voices of our female readers cry, "Happy, happy Lady Mannikin!"

We are convinced that it was only a combination of the rarest accidents that filled the house of Sir Scipio with the choicest of all things: his very door hinges turned upon the fat of the land. He had the best cook—the rarest wines—the handsomest horses —the most superb wife. It is a pleasure to know this: it is a consolation to all who would look into the hearts of men, to find the temperate and the unworldly thus appointed: to see them thus providentially rewarded.

You will hear a good, lowly creature sing the praises of pure water—call it the wine of Adam when he walked in Paradise— when, somehow, fate has bestowed upon the eulogist the finest burgundy. He declares himself contented with a crust—although a beneficent fairy has hung a fat haunch or two in his larder. And then, for woman, he asks—what is all beauty but skin-deep? Behold the lawful bed-fellow of the querist: why, destiny has tied to him an angel—a perfect angel, save that for a time she has laid aside her wings. Now is it not delightful to see these humble folk, who tune their tongues to the honour of dry bread

and water, compelled, by the gentle force of fortune, to chew venison and swallow claret ?

"A steady, respectable young man ?" asked Sir Scipio of his butler, with a searching look.

"They say, Sir Scipio, the lightest hand in the county."

"A lad of morality ?"—

"He skims a beard off like froth."

"A dutiful son, and a peaceful neighbour ?"—

"Lady Bag says he dresses hair like any mermaid."

"He may come."

And Job Pippin was straightway summoned to shave Sir Scipio Mannikin ! Job crossed the threshold, and the Lares of Mannikin Hall gave a feeble wail. However, weeks passed on, and Job reaped new laurels with Sir Scipio's beard. Job's hand swept softly as the sweet south along the stubbled chin, and played like any butterfly about a peruke. That consummate genius should ever lack self-restraint !

About this time a domestic accident occurred to Lady Scipio—she suddenly lost her maid. The girl had been found guilty of receiving a valentine, "a filthy thing," in the words of the knight, "with two hearts on one arrow, a couple of disgusting pigeons at the top, and loathsome love-verses at the bottom. A person who could receive such things, was not fit to be about Lady Scipio." Kitty White—to the sorrow of her mistress—was thrust from Mannikin Hall. And what is most extraordinary, the poor girl—albeit her suspicions fell upon two or three—could not, to her dying hour, precisely determine who had ruined her.

Indignant virtue is ever heedless of worldly consequences ; otherwise Sir Scipio had retained the delinquent for at least another day ; for Kitty was wont to raise to herself a crown of glory in the hair of her mistress, which she displayed with a taste only inferior to that of the superb Pippins himself. Now it so happened, that the day following the departure of the wanton maid, was the day appointed by Sir Scipio for a solemn festival to the stomachs of the heads of the neighbouring clergy. For a week past, two turtles in the kitchen of the knight, had lain upon their backs, resignedly awaiting the destroyer. Out of pure respect to his guests, Sir Scipio wished his lady to appear in all her brightness. It was provoking that the guilt of Kitty had not remained unknown until after the feast ! There was no remedy ; for once, at most, the tresses of Lady Scipio must fall into a masculine hand. Yes ; Job Pippins—(again the Lares squeaked, and shuddered,)—must dress the hair of Lady Mannikin!

Now, in those days, ladies wore powder.

CHAPTER II.

We now approach the fall of Job. We have deferred as long as possible his ignominy—accident, we should say—but it is in vain to procrastinate; and so we at once produce this Tarquin with a razor. Compose yourselves, dear ladies, but—but enter Job Pippins!

"Upon my faith, a very handsome young man—a most genteel youth! There is a delicious wickedness in his face—ha!—the rogue has an eye like a hawk. A very proper young fellow!"

But, madam, you forget—we call him a—a—Tarquin!

"No doubt, sir—no doubt. A very charming young man."

"A perfect figure—neither too tall, nor too short," says the Dowager Lady Maudlincourt, looking at Job with the eye of a drill serjeant; "erect as a staff, and elastic as a cane." And the judgment of the dowager has passed into a proverb: no woman was ever so celebrated for the legs of her footmen.

Behold Job in the library of Sir Scipio, who had somewhat fantastically determined that his lady should receive our hero in that ark of learning, the husband himself sitting leering by. The tresses of Venus were unbound, and—oh, character! and oh, daily bread! But let us not anticipate. Job, with steady hand and innocent thoughts, proceeded in his task. He saw that Lady Scipio was awfully beautiful; and a feeling of reverence thrilled to the tips of his fingers as they moved about her lovely head. He touched her hair as though it had been her heart-strings; and here and there disposed a curl at her neck, as if he laid a jewel worth a million there. Sir Scipio held in his hands Boetius, and in his eye Pippins.

And still Job lingered at his task, and still he felt his terrible trial. He seemed petrified by what the historians of weddings call—the novelty of his situation. To have beheld Lady Scipio and the barber, you would have thought that Diana had at a word called from a block of marble the bloodless image of man to dress her golden hair—a statue, made and animated for the nonce.

"Mr. Springe," said a servant, half opening the door.

"I 'll—yes—I 'll come to him," answered Sir Scipio, and he quitted the library. As the husband departed, the sun, which until that moment had thrown a blaze of light upon the Mannikin arms emblazoned in the windows, withdrew its glorious beam.

Already did Job approach the termination of his trials ; already was he within a moment of deliverance, when the enemy of man made him his own. The locks of Lady Scipio were duly curled —and bound—and placed : already was her head a thing for Phidias, when the last ineffable grace was to be showered upon it —when the "new fallen snow" of the powder-puff was to descend, like odours shaken from the wings of a thousand little loves. Lady Scipio held her mask to her face, and Job Pippins took the powder-puff in his hand !

Job walked twice or thrice around her ladyship and trembled. He tried to puff, but his unsteady hand, in fitful gusts, sent forth the powder above, below, about, but not upon the head. Again, Job addressed himself sternly to his purpose ; he gave a "hem !" calling up resolution to his heart, and nerves to his fingers. Again, like a lion in a den, he made a circuit, breathing hard for virtuous self-possession. Never—never was barber so tempted ! Be the reader judge.

We said Lady Scipio held a mask to her face ; we told not the truth. It is most certain that she covered her forehead, eyes, and nose, with a little black vizard, but then—her lips !—her lips were ripe, red, and naked to the eye as the lips of Eve. And these, pouting apart, and breathing Araby to the senses of Job, said, in their delicious ruddiness, a thousand, thousand things the tongue could never utter. And then the eyes, the watchers of the treasure, were closed : the fruit seemed every instant to grow towards the hand, and the awful dragons were asleep ! Nevertheless, Job tried to puff.

Man of flesh can do no more. Ay, well done, Job ! puff, and turn your eye from the peril. That's right—look above at the bust of Seneca ; banish the weakness crying in your heart, by the force of lofty thoughts. Very good ; cast another glance towards that thin folio in vellum. That, Job, is "Thomas à Kempis," a capital tome for men in your condition. Good again ; let your eyes shun the balmy evil, and feed upon "The Whole Duty of Man." Ha, Job ! now, indeed, have you triumphed—now are you safe from the tempter. Yes, Job ; puff—puff—but keep your eyeballs fixed upon Plato ! What a god-like head, eh, Job ? What strength—yet what serenity in that magnificent brow ! Yes ; Plato, Job—Plato is—

"Smack"—"sma-a-ck"—"sma-a-a-a-ck-ck-ck !"

Astounded reader, will it be believed—was ever such effrontery, such hardihood known ? We have heard of robbery beneath the gallows—of pockets picked with the fruit of picking pockets swinging in sight of the incorrigible thief—but that a man, with Plato in his eye, should commit a carnal sin with his lips !

Would we could show how Job Pippins kissed Lady Scipio Mannikin! Does the reader recollect the first four or five quick, sharp, splitting notes of the blackbird, pounced upon a worm—shrieking, whistling, exulting, hysterical? No; they want rapidity, intensity, volume. In our despair, we must even put up with the words of one of the housemaids, who, albeit, she was spared a sight of the operation, vowed that Job "tore up kisses by the very roots!" We fear, too, that the description of the maid may be thought obscure; however, we hope we know when to prefer feminine impressions to our own. And now, gentle reader, it is our most painful duty to call your attention to a family picture. The last kiss is doubtless still ringing in your ears, and the roof-tree of Mannikin Hall still vibrating with the shock of kisses.

Imagine, most imaginative reader, a woman, young and lovely, starting at some loathsome thing; say, a boa at once. Her arms flung up—her lips wide apart—her eyes full of horror—her bosom indrawn by a loud, loud shriek—about to come! Such is Lady Scipio.

Next, behold a very comely young man at her feet—his hands clasped and shaking—his jaw dropt—his eyelids down—and his knees grinding the floor, in the desperate hope of falling through! Such is Job Pippins.

Now, attentive reader, look to the right, and you will see at the door a portly gentleman of fifty—his face, generally a lightish purple, now a tolerable black. Indeed his present colour, supported by a flattened nose and voluminous lips, for a brief moment make Lady Scipio a Desdemona. Such is the knight—such the outraged spouse!

Glaring over the shoulders of Sir Scipio are two sea-greeen eyes, the curious property of Samuel Springe, the man of business—a sort of human lurcher—to the lord of the Hall.

One eye, and only a part of the nose of the footman, are visible between the arm of Sir Scipio and the door-post. Though but fragments, they speak volumes.

Brief was the horrid pause. Sir Scipio—speechless and champing foam—seized the presented stick of Springe; and, raising it high in air, the skull of Job had been no better than a crushed egg-shell, had not the uplifted weapon happily caught the projecting prongs of an enormous pair of antlers hanging over the door. Thoughtless of the impediment, Sir Scipio flung his whole weight upon his arm—Springe pressed forward—the footman was no less impetuous, when—with a thunder that seemed to shake the steadfast earth—down came the honours of the chace—down fell the horns; and, assisted by Springe and

the footman behind, down fell Sir Scipio upon them! Then indeed his lady shrieked; and well she might. Would not any woman scream, seeing her husband all but gored to death by antlers?

Sir Scipio roared and shouted, whilst Springe and the footman strove to relieve him of the horns; but, somehow, the more they tugged, the more Sir Scipio became entangled. The whole mansion was alarmed—servants of both sexes thronged to the spot—the family at the next house threw up their windows—and still poor Sir Scipio was as firmly fixed to the antlers, as though they were a part and parcel of his natural person. And then, roaring to be left to himself, when that indulgence was allowed him, he freed his body of the forky incumbrance with incredible dexterity.

The knight, with his clothes in very strips, fell into what was called his easy-chair. Pippins—with unheard of stupidity, for he had not taken to his heels—dropt upon his knees, and the spectators—their ears opening like hungry oysters—formed in a ring!

Sir Scipio seemed for a moment to borrow the orbs of his man of business; and heavily turning his knightly head, as though a weight had newly fallen there, he looked with very green eyes at his crimsoned wife, dyed that hue with fear—with agitation for her spouse. And then the knight, turning to Job Pippins, and lifting up a forefinger——

Had Sir Scipio been the spirit of ague—his forefinger the little wand with which he shook the bones of nations, Job had not trembled more vehemently as he looked upon it. People may judge somewhat of his emotion, when we state that the three shillings and sixpence in his left waistcoat-pocket jingled very audibly. The man himself might have acted the hypocrite, but who shall doubt the feeling declared through gold and silver?

And Job trembled; and his voice rattled in his throat; and, at length, shaking with compunction, yet sharpened to a scream by the intensity of its penitence, it cried, "I—I—I—couldn't help it!"

And Job Pippins could *not* help it.

CHAPTER III.

What is man, woman, or even child, without character? The skeleton in the closet of an anatomist is less loathsome—hath stronger claims on our consideration—our sympathy. No matter though it be the bony outline of a condemned rogue; the penalty has been paid, and with commendable charity we bear no malice towards the departed. Such was the placability of Sir Scipio. With a proper abhorrence of crime, he would hang the knave who should steal an apple, and then utter a religious discourse on his relics—on mortal weakness, temptation, and the last account. Whether Job feared this double purpose of the knight—or, whether, urged by his affrighted conscience, he fled the town—we care not to seek. This, however, we know: some fortnight after the affair at the Hall—(by some it was called an assault, by some an intended elopement; whilst some swore that, but for the kindness of Sir Scipio, Job had been trussed at the assizes,)—the criminal was snugly ensconced in the chimney-corner of the Hare-and-Hounds, a sufficiently respectable alehouse some ten miles from Job's native town. It had been his determination to travel straight to London; but Sally, the daughter, stood at the door of the inn, and—how could he help it?—Job entered. Job possessed in no mean degree three things—according to Heloise—most dangerous to the sex: he wrote well, talked well, and sang well. Hence, his reputation in divers kitchens; and as he was one of those wise people—

> "Qui ne trouvent le laurier bon,
> Que pour la sauce et le jambon,"—

or, as we would translate it—

> "Who think the bays are all a sham,
> Unless they flavour sauce or ham,"—

Job was content to take his reward from the spit; and, after all, how much of what by simple people is thought fame, is merely sought for as the representative of so many legs of mutton. We may make fame an angelic creature on the tombs of poets; but how often is she really invoked as a bouncing landlady? May not the noblest niche be the larder? Let us not forget Job.

A few days after the arrival of our fugitive at the inn, he possessed not a penny; and having, for at least a week, lived on

his accomplishments, his landlord began to cast significant glances doorwards. It was three o'clock and Job had not dined. With his nose flattened against the window-pane, Job sat with his eye fixed upon an opposite milestone ("120 miles to London,") when who should amble up to the house but Cuttles, the clerk of Job's parish! Job felt himself dipt in cold water.

"I was mortal certain I should find him here," cried a voice that to Job seemed to saw through the very wainscot. "Service to ye, Miss Sally,—nobody run away with you yet? Well, well—stop till I'm young again, and"—and what was to be the consequence to Sally, Job heard not; but in another second the door opened, and he heard in the sweet twang of his native town—

"So, Mr. Pippins!"

The speaker was a stringy little man of about fifty; with one of those faces which have but two definite expressions, frowning command and simpering servility. On the present occasion he wore his hardest look; which, nevertheless, was not so terrible as the fright of Job would make it. But the fact is, Job saw not Cuttles in his physical truth; no, he heard the greeting of the clerk, and before his eyes appeared the executioner of the county holding in his ready hand a massive chain of wedding-rings. Each syllable uttered by Cuttles was a rattling of the links. Conscience is terribly imaginative. Job, it will be seen, had good cause for his perturbation.

"Well, Job, as what is done can't be undone," (now, whence Cuttles had culled this fragment of philosophy we know not) "we must make the best of the matter." Job whistled. "Now, Job, I come to you as a friend; and so, from first to last, tell me how it all happened." The parish-clerk crossed his knees, having edged his chair towards the offender.

"She was always a bold thing," said Job, sullenly.

"Ha!" cried Cuttles, and he gaped as though he was to hear with his mouth. "Well?"

"And one fine evening last June, as I was leaning, looking into the churchyard—I'd been to shave Mrs. Dodds's poodle—I shaved Dodds when he died—I—I—" Job, wheeling round, looked very gravely in the face of Cuttles, and asked, a little solemnly, "Did you ever taste the ale at this house?"

Cuttles evidently knew something of the human heart; for, without a reply, he knocked and cried, "Sally, a mug of ale."

Pippins meekly added, "the best."

"Yes; you was staring into the churchyard?" suggested Cuttles, as Job set down the emptied mug.

"Why, the poodle brought it into my head, and I was looking

for Dodds's stone, when she came behind me, and said, 'Job, you merry tinker'"—

Cuttles stared, and pushed his chair away, "She never was so familiar?"

"Wasn't she?" cried Job, with something like a groan, and a look of bitterness. "Wasn't she?"

"But what expressions! Well, there is no knowing any of 'em," observed the parish-clerk.

"Like bees—you never see their sting till you feel it," cried Pippins. "'Well, Job,' said she, 'you merry tinker,'"—again the parish-clerk, like a monkey watching for nuts, lifted up his eyebrows, "'give me a kiss!' And saying no more, she threw her arms about my neck, and gave me such a salute, a team two fields away went gallop off at the smack."

"And so meek—so modest—so delicate!" cried the wondering Cuttles. "Well, Job, if all this be true, you have been hardly used. However, being come upon the business, I must hear all. And after that, Job,"——

"After that, I—you wouldn't think it, Master Cuttles,"—said Job, with a confidential air—"but, upon my honour, Sally's father not going out, I hav'n't used my teeth since seven this morning."

Cuttles, with mysterious generosity, ordered something to eat, whilst Job timidly pressed the mug on the notice of Sally, who quickly produced cold fowl and ham, and a new supply of ale—the best. Whilst Job employed his teeth, Cuttles filled up the pause with brandy and water. Hunger and thirst somewhat abated, Cuttles returned to the examination, "Well, Job, she kissed you, you say, and after that?"—

"Mr. Cuttles," said Job, and the clerk stared at the altered tone of the speaker, "I don't see why you should be so curious—you may take away, Sally—I know the worst, and there's an end of it."

"The worst!" echoed Cuttles. "I 've brought you twenty pounds."

"I tell ye, Cuttles, it 's no use. I 'll shoulder walnut first."

"Walnut!"

"Ay, go for a soldier. A drum before her tongue. Four words are as good as a thousand—I won't marry her."

"Marry—marry Lady Mannikin!" and the parish-clerk stared, confounded.

"Why, Cuttles, didn't you mean—eh—didn't you come about Susan Biggs?"

"Phoo!—By the way, we have made Joe, the boy at the White Horse, marry her; yes, he had five pounds and a leg of mutton dinner.—I come about the affair with her ladyship."

"I—I couldn't help it," said Job, evidently relieved by the information of the clerk. "I suppose all the world abuse me?"

"It was very wicked, but you have friends, Job." Pippins looked doubtingly. "It certainly was not right, after the kindness of Sir Scipio, to seek to deprive him of her ladyship,"—Pippins gaped—"to seduce the wife of your patron,"—Pippins stared—"to take advantage of his confidence to fly with her to a foreign land—to—"

"Mr. Cuttles!" roared Job, striking the table, and leaping to his feet.

"However," continued the clerk, unmoved by Job's vehemence—"however, there are Christian souls who feel for you. A committee of ladies have taken your case into their consideration; and though they doubtless think you a most shocking person—indeed, after the hearsay evidence, there can be no doubt of the guilt of both of ye—nevertheless, they send you by me, as a trifling mark of their respect, I mean compassion, twenty pounds."

"Twenty pounds!" echoed the bewildered Pippins.

"And more," continued Cuttles; "Miss Daffodil, the chairwoman of the committee, bade me say, that should Sir Scipio, preparatory to a divorce, take the matter into court, the damages, whatever they might be, should be defrayed; that though you were a dangerous, wicked man, you should be held harmless."

"Twenty pounds—court—damages!" exclaimed Pippins, in a breath. "What *do* you mean?"

"Pish!" answered the clerk, with a wink, and emphatically thrusting his fore-finger into the belly of Job; "pish! Now, hearken, lad; don't think to leave us; come back; take a better shop; and, my word for't, this little matter will bring you treble custom."

"Do you think so?" asked Pippins, after a pause.

"Certain; and if Sir Scipio should only bring his action——"

"Action!" cried Pippins.

——"Your fortune is made." So saying, Cuttles, with a sagacious nod, finished his brandy-and-water; then looked benevolently at Pippins.

Job was puzzled; again he asked, but with deeper seriousness, "Mr. Cuttles, what *do* you mean?"

"There—there 's the twenty pounds: you, of course, will pay the reckoning:" and Cuttles, indifferent to the question, put down the money. "And now, Job, you rogue, do tell me the whole matter;" and the clerk rubbed his hands, with epicurean anticipation. "Tell me—you and her ladyship were going to

France? I hear the servants say France; nay, that the postilion —but come, Job"——

"Mr. Cuttles, losing my wits, I do confess I kissed Lady Scipio Mannikin; I—I—couldn't help it; and then"——

"Yes, yes; and then?"——

"And then, as though I had done murder, I fell upon my knees; and then, Sir Scipio coming in, had well nigh ended me; and then, I found myself flung out of the door; and then—and here I am! As for her ladyship, they who speak a word against her are cowards and villains."

"Then it isn't all true?" asked the clerk, staggered by the earnestness of Job.

"The Lord forgive all liars!" cried Job, "there's nothing true but what I 've said."

"And there was nothing—nothing but a stolen kiss?"

"Nothing!" vociferated Job, in so loud a tone that it brought Sally and her father into the room. "Nothing!" and Job solemnised his assertion with an oath.

Immediately, Cuttles snatched the twenty pounds from the table, and took his hat. "As such is the case, Mr. Pippins—as there has been no ingratitude—no violence in the affair—I shall take back the money to the ladies. As they have subscribed under misrepresentation, the cash must certainly be returned to them." And in three minutes the clerk was in the saddle trotting homewards to lay his stewardship before the fair committee.

"What a fool to speak the truth!" said the landlord, when he had learned the story. "What a fool!"

Job coloured to the eyes, and raising himself to his full height, said, with a certain air of pride—"Master Nip, I couldn't help it."

CHAPTER IV.

"109 to London."

Mile-stones to the penniless adventurer are serious things. To yourself, prosperous reader, now carried post onward, and now comfortably seated on Jessy, your mouse-coloured mare, mile-stones are no more than so many lumps of granite; but how different to the poor traveller, with his anxious face turned, for the first time, towards that land of milk and honey and money—London! Worked on by his hopes or fears, every stone that leads him nearer to the goal, speaks better or worse tidings; may to his fancy assume the face of kindly greeting or squint-eyed scorn.

Thus, every block may be as of a long line of squab, uncouth guards, such as we see in Arab fairy-land, each growing in hideousness upon its neighbour: and thus, more and more scared by the low brows, hanging lips, and savage eyes of the petrified figures, the foot-sore traveller feels his courage fail and his heart fairly die within him, as he passes the last terrible dwarf, and snuffs the smoke of the mysterious city. If, as the great teacher says, there be sermons in smallest pebbles, what profound thoughts, what glorious images, what ennobling, sweetening sympathies may have been struck from out a London mile-stone!

"109 to London." Job Pippins sat upon the stone, staring at the sinking sun. The sun sank, and Job turning his head, saw the London waggon slowly approaching. In an instant he was greeted by the waggoner with loud cries for help. Job ran to the waggon, and to his astonishment saw the bay cob of Sir Scipio Mannikin tied behind. Ere Job could put a question, the waggoner showed his teeth and scratched his head, with an air of satisfaction; "I say, I ha' got a dead un in waggon."

"A dead man!" cried Job, with more horror than curiosity. "A dead man!"

"Picked un up, in middle of road; the cob war standin' loike a lamb beside un. I shall tak' un to next house, the Barley Mow."

"For God's sake, stop!" exclaimed Job, and jumped into the waggon. In an instant he recognised the all but departed knight. Struck by apoplexy, he had fallen from his horse. In less than a minute, Job had torn off Sir Scipio's coat, bound his arm, and produced a razor, the waggoner looking silently and serenely on. However, when he beheld the weapon, he asked—"What wilt do, mun—what wilt do?"

"Bleed him," replied Job, with exquisite composure. "I fear his heart has stopped."

"Loikely—I do think it be Grinders, the lawyer of ——. Cut un deep;" and the waggoner opened his eyes to watch if the lawyer really had red blood, or japan ink. "Cut un deep," he cried encouragingly, "though if it be Grinders, by what I hear, it be a shame to disturb un."

"Grinders! pshaw, 'tis Sir Scipio Mannikin."

"Wounds!" roared the waggoner, "noa, mun, noa; don't meddle wi' such folks in my waggon." Saying this, he sought to stay the hand of Job, at the moment applying the razor to the arm of the sufferer; but in so attempting, drove the weapon deep into the limb. Job turned pale, and the waggoner groaned and trembled. "We shall be hanged, mun, hanged—hanged—hanged!" he shouted forth, and corroborating echo blandly

repeated—"hanged—hanged—hanged." The waggoner untied the cob, mounted it, and galloped away like any St. George, leaving Pippins in the twilight with his lacerated patient. The blood flowed, and Job began to count the pulsations of the apoplectic knight, who in about ten minutes came to a dim consciousness; for beholding Job standing over him with a drawn razor, he started back, and his teeth chattered. At this instant, the gallop of horses was heard, and Job looking out, beheld the waggoner flying along on the knight's cob, followed by a barb, which, from its height, points, and wooden paces, was doubtless descended from the famous steed of Troy, carrying a short round man, in a broad-brimmed hat, who, at a distance, looked like a black cushion on horseback. Providentially, as the knight afterwards observed, the landlord of the Barley Mow had broken his leg correcting his wife, and had called in Doctor Saffron, who, providentially again, happened to be Sir Scipio's surgeon. Doctor Saffron took up the wounded arm, and looked at Job—"Is this your doing?" Job looked yes, but spoke not. "Miracles do happen in our art, Sir Scipio," said Saffron consolingly, "so perhaps the arm may be saved. Bleeding, fellow!" he cried, turning fiercely upon Job—"I call it capital carving."

"I couldn't help it," said Pippins, and he wiped his razor.

"And you found Sir Scipio lying in the road?" said the doctor.

"Rolled up loike a hedge-pig," said the waggoner.

"Ha!" and the doctor caught the eye of the knight—"Ha!" he shook his head three times—"Ha! turtle—turtle!"

The waggoner stared, for how was he to know that Saffron alluded to a turtle-feast (we have before spoken of it,) to which the doctor oddly enough, as he thought, was not invited? A vehicle being obtained from the Barley Mow, Sir Scipio, in charge of the surgeon, was removed to Mannikin Hall.

A long, weary walk lay before Job; nevertheless, the waggoner sternly refused the hospitality of his creeping ark, and, the night advancing, Pippins looked hopelessly around for a place of lodging. Thrice he resolved to try the Barley Mow, and—for he was known there—thrice he paused. Sauntering undecided onwards, he saw a speck of light suddenly burn through the distant trees. Leaping a hedge, Job made direct to the beacon, and now losing its friendly ray, and now again beholding it burning, like the eye of a good fairy, through the gloom, he stood before the very hut, which in size and shape seemed no bigger than a giant's lantern. Job approached the door, when he was suddenly stopped by a long-drawn breath, proceeding as he thought from the earth. The light disappeared, and he bent with

his out-stretched hands towards the ground; he felt nothing, but again he heard the sound as from one heavily sleeping. In an instant a growl rattled in the throat of the house-dog; and a feminine voice cried, in a calm, cold tone, "Down, bitch! Who's there?" Job's heart leapt when he heard it was a woman; and calling up the sweetest notes of his voice, he proceeded to speak of long travel, hunger, destitution, and other small annoyances, the bitch growling what to Job's ears seemed contempt and disbelief of his history. Inwardly cursing the bitch, Job listened for human speech; not a further word did the woman utter, but gave over the traveller to the uncompromising animal within, that to every new solicitation of Job, growled still deeper denial. Job expended his best words and his blandest tones on inexorable dog's flesh: at length he turned from the hut, and was again about to seek the open road. Irresolute, he thought of the woman's voice and paused: there was something in its sound that still cried in his heart, that cried in his ears, "Turn again, Job Pippins." Job stood, with his eyes upon the ground, when he heard near footsteps. Quickly sheltering himself behind a tree, he saw three men proceed towards the hut; at a single knock the door was opened, and they entered. As the door swung back, Job beheld a most comfortable blaze, and at the same instant a gust of wind chilled him to the bones. The blast brought resolution; again Job's knuckles rattled at the door, and quickly at the summons appeared a man with no hospitable countenance. Job briefly told his wants. Had he talked to a grim head carved in oak, Job had moved it just as soon to sympathy. Its owner drew back, and was about to fling-to the door with emphatic denial, when his eye gleamed, and his mouth widened into a grin, and passing his horny fingers through his grey wiry hair, he cried, "Humph! It 's cold, too—well, come in. Moll, the stool." The thing ordered was thrown towards Job, who sank resignedly upon it, expanding his breast, and spreading out his palms to a roaring coal and wood fire. Job tried to look at the best possible ease; and yet the place in which he found himself, and the group surrounding him, were not calculated to endow him with serenest feelings.

The walls of the hut were formed of wattles coated with mud; the whole roofed with thatch and furze. It seemed a hovel raised for a season—a place thrown up by stealth; a cabin for a Timon or a coiner. The furniture was of a mixed kind: on a table made of rough deals was an elegant draught-board of ebony and mother-of-pearl; beside it a small Etruscan bronze lamp. The stool, hospitably awarded to Pippins, was the only legitimate seat; the three masters of the dwelling—for each

seemed magisterial—supporting themselves on empty casks. In one corner lay various articles of clothing on a heap of straw, dry leaves, and rushes—cloaks, coats, jackets, some of them evidently made for others than their present possessors. Job looked at the opposite wall, where a large fragment of mirror—Eve had her fountain, Molly her looking-glass—held by nails driven into the baked mud, showed him his company. As he looked—despite his vivacity and constitutional courage—Job somewhat desponded ; did once or twice shift himself uneasily, as a fresh-whipped schoolboy, on his form. Truly Job saw no hospitable smiles to comfort and assure him. The man, the elder of the three, who let him in, was of middle stature : a fellow with the eyes and beak of an eagle, and the throat of a bull. He sat with his arms squared upon the table, leaning his chin upon his hands ; he looked like a wild beast ere it springs. He wore a loose white flannel jacket, old leathern breeches, and a striped shirt, which, open at the neck, his broad tanned chest looked like a worn hide. And so sat Phineas, and glared at Job.

Bats and Mortlake were much younger than their friend ;—let us say, friend Phineas. Bats was ugly to a merit. His face was scarlet, as if newly flayed ; his eyes small and weak, one or them ever glancing at his nose, that turned a widened nostril up to meet it ; his teeth were scattered, and stood like rusty broken nails ; his brow he might have covered with his two fingers, and hair, of vivid red, in close, lumpy curls, like a beacon fire, crowned the height. This Gorgon, be it noted by the way, had dared to look at Molly ; and to him she became as stone. Mortlake, the junior of the three, had a reckless, gipsy look, that might have been called handsome, but for the scowl that too frequently darkened it. The pair sat, now glancing at Job, and now at Phineas, whose sudden hospitality had evidently puzzled them. A pace from these stood Molly, leaning, with folded arms, against the wall. There was something wild and dangerous in her demeanour ; but nothing vulgar. She had the figure of a huntress—tall, round, and finely developed. Her eyes were black as death and swift as light ; her dark hair hung in long curls down her cheeks and back, bringing into fine relief the pale, yet perfectly healthy flesh. Her swelling, disdainful lips showed a glimpse of teeth white as whitest curds. Job gasped as he caught her face in the glass ! A queen in her coronation robes had not so much awed him ; she seemed so strange a mixture of the angel and the devil. Silence having continued for a painful time, Bats, in the depth of his humanity, tried to lead the conversation. " What 's o'clock ? " he asked.

At this instant, the silver sound of a repeater was heard in the hut, when the amazed Job jumped to his feet, and pulled from his waistcoat-pocket a splendid gold watch. He held it in his hand, looking aghast. The eyes of Bats and Mortlake glistened as they leered at the chronometer; Phineas showed no surprise, having marked the glittering chain and seals dangling from Job's pocket ere he entered the hovel. "I say, friend," said Phineas calmly, "time must be worth something to you, to score it with such a watch as that."

"It isn't mine," cried Job, and the perspiration broke upon his forehead. "It isn't mine."

"Ha! ha! ha!" and the three laughed at the unnecessary information.

"A mistake," cried Pippins. "I got it in the oddest way, but I couldn't help it—I tell you it isn't mine!"

"Ha! ha! ha!" again roared Job's hearers.

"I—oh Lord!—I shall be hanged," said Pippins, as he thought to himself.

"In course," observed Mortlake, comfortingly; "some day we all shall be hanged. Then why the devil should you make such a fuss about it?"

"These gentlemen," said Molly, with a wicked smile, "are so partic'lar."

"You can't think how I came by it!" exclaimed Job, and again the fellows chuckled in derision. Job hastily felt his pockets, lest he had other of his neighbour's goods unwittingly about him, when he pulled out a handkerchief fairly soaked with Sir Scipio's blood. At sight of this, Phineas rose with a grave look—Mortlake gave an expressive chuck—and Bats uttered a low, long, accusing whistle.

"What! he was game, was he? Well, as it 's all over now, tell us," said Phineas, "how it happened."

"First tell us," broke in the cautious Bats, "where 's the body?"

Vain was it for Job to persist in the truth—vain to dwell minutely on the operation performed on the knight—or the accident which had transferred the watch from the fob of its lawful owner to the waistcoat-pocket of its present possessor;—all he said was only met with increasing peals of laughter. "Well, gentlemen," said Job, half-nettled by their merriment, half-fearing their nods and looks, "dark as it is, and long as the road may be, I shall set out for Mannikin Hall. Sir Scipio at least must believe that I only borrowed his watch to count his pulse." Saying this, Job made for the door; when Phineas, setting his broad back full against it, remarked, with provoking gravity, "Travel

to-night? You don't know who you may meet: how do you know you mayn't be robbed?"

"Yes," said Bats, "you 'd better stay with us, there 's a great deal of opposition on this road." And without waiting for a reply, Phineas made fast the door, crying the while, "Molly, the gin."

Immediately, the unresisting Job found himself again upon his stool, a horn of gin drawn by the hand of Molly between his fingers, Molly herself, with her large lustrous eyes melting on him, on his knee, and his three new friends ranged before him. The wind grew louder without, and the fire ruddier and warmer within—the faces of the three hosts, as the light played upon them, in a short time looked to Job faces of the jolliest, frankest dogs that ever emptied pitcher—the mud walls lost their darkness—Molly lost her scorn—and Job found his voice.

"Another horn—one more," cried the princely Phineas, "and the song will melt in your throat, and run out."

"A little water with it," said Job, with a late temperance, for his eyes stood like doll's eyes in his head; "a little water," and Job somewhat coyly held forth the vessel.

"Well, if you must; but I never mix my liquor at home; the water about here is so bad." And saying this, Bats filled up the half-emptied horn of Job with pure spirit. "And now, now the song."

Job, as we have before remarked, was a singer. He had ditties for all complexions; black, brown, or fair, he could with small preparation adapt himself to the locks and eyes of the presiding divinity. Taking another draft of inspiration—looking a passionate look at Molly—and seizing her wrist, and drawing her hand half through his hand, he held the compressed points of her beating fingers as he warbled—

Oh! my Molly 's a thief, I must own;
Only look at her eyes,
They belong to the skies,
And her voice for some angel's is known.

Oh, my Molly 's in debt I avow—
Yes, she owes for her lip
Where the honey-bees sip—
For her breath to the jessamine bough.

Oh, my Molly is cruel as fair;
Once a raven was shot,
Snowy white without spot—
She had ta'en all his black for her hair.

Who my Molly is, hope not to guess—
No; she is not the girl
Who talks di'mond and pearl,
For what gem in the world 's worth her *yes?*

Oh, my——

But at this stage of the slip-shod verse, Job fell from the stool, breaking down in the unfinished song. As he lay insensible upon the earth, Phineas bent over him, but was startled by a knock at the door.

"Who the devil 's that?" muttered Bats.

CHAPTER V.

Bats cautiously opened the door, and one stride brought the new visitor close to the prostrate Pippins.

"What carrion 's this?" asked the new comer, jerking his toe against the shoulder of the bacchanal, happily insensible of the enquiry. Bats was about to explain, when the querist stopped him by a gesture of impatient command, and with an educated twitch of the hand, possessed himself of the repeater, temptingly peeping from the pocket of Job. Phineas's face fell into shadow at the dexterity of the operator. If there be, as we wish to believe, honour among thieves, sure we are it is alloyed with envy: a man with a hand like a ham cannot complacently view the snaky palm of a more perfect brother. Hence the bile of Phineas at the adroitness of Skinks, who, indeed, bore about his person ample outside evidence of superior talent. His coat was finer, his——but we must try to show the reader Skinks.

Our new friend was a highway Hercules. Could he have condescended to eat what dull people call honest bread—that is, as Skinks thought, bread without any butter—he might have passed a useful life in a caravan. Many a man, with far less pretensions than Skinks, has lived very respectably as a giant. With no assistance from the shoemaker, Skinks stood six feet seven. No man had a more ingenuous face, for he looked the varlet that he really was. His skin was sallow from midnight watching; (his works, his pistols, constantly smelt of midnight oil); his voice had sunk, beneath night air and brandy, to a raw and rugged bass; and his temper, tried by several juries, had suffered somewhat from the ordeal. His language was generally laconic, but sustaining and sympathetic. Many a trembling, sinking passenger had he,

with one word, prevailed upon to stand. His strength was amazing; for often, like Milo, had he stopped a carriage in full career with only his fore-finger on a trigger. So much for the man of clay. His dress was worthy of its tenant; he wore a claret coat, "smeared" with lace that passed for gold—black velvet breeches, with boots—certainly from the last of the ogres, who, when we were young, was wont to take three leagues at a step. A three-corner hat, bound and looped with bright metal, half-cocked upon his head, fearfully harmonised with a brace of pistols in his belt. A huge pigtail hung, like a dead snake, down his back. Such was the man who now with folded arms looked contemptuously below on Pippins—asleep and dreaming—we know not what, for there may be deep things in drunkenness.

And where was Molly? Drawn to her full height, her face flushed, her bosom heaving, and her terribly black eyes fairly eating the Colossus before her—he all the while as insensible of the attention as his prototype of Rhodes. "Lucius, Lucius," cried Molly—and at length Skinks, by a growl, acknowledged the appeal. "Molly!" and he sat down, and Molly sank upon his knee, and wreathed her arms about his neck—Skinks, in deep contemplation, slowly winding up the repeater he had plucked from Job, the heart-strings of Phineas cracking at the sound; and Bats gasping and glaring with jealousy at the blessed pair; for Skinks had a bear's love for Molly. It might be he was drawn towards her by purest sympathy; her father had been hanged for shooting a gamekeeper.

"What luck?" Mortlake ventured to enquire of the serious Skinks. "Any thing upon the road?"

"The road!" echoed Skinks, with the disgust of a man who feels he has mistaken his profession—"That a man of my standing should be brought to rob on foot! May the man that shot my mare—well, well," and Skinks ground his teeth, strangled a rising groan, and breaking into a whistle, tapped with his fingers on the back of Molly—Bats choking in commendable silence. "This is the first prize I 've drawn these ten days," and Skinks somewhat ostentatiously displayed Sir Scipio's repeater.

"'Tis easy to bag the bird when another has springed it," said Phineas, and his lip quivered.

"What now," growled Lucius, "what are ye but hands and feet—dead flesh, if I had not the head to move it? Jack-of-the-Gibbet, though a scarecrow of ten years' hanging, would be as serviceable a rogue. Springed it! Well then, we 'll take Blenheim from Marlborough, and give the victory to the drummers."

"Why, in such matters," sullenly replied Phineas, "I don't know if there ar'n't sometimes worse used folks than drummers."

"Hold thy tongue, Phin," counselled Molly—"thou 'lt ruffle Lucius."

"The hangman ruffle him and band him, too!" muttered Phineas indistinctly.

"Who growled there—thou, Phineas, or the dog?" and Skinks set Molly off his knee, and advancing towards the rebel, looked him into quaking. Skinks stood for an answer.

"The dog," said Phineas, in a tone not unworthy of the quadruped. Skinks sank tranquilly on his seat, and Molly resumed her throne upon his knee.

"That 's the worst of Phin," cried Bats: "he doesn't know common sense. He 'd rob a captain of all that makes his commission worth a farthing; the profit and glory of other people's work."

"Be still, Bats—be still," and Molly knitted her brows, and turned towards the offender, who glowed a deeper scarlet at the reproof. His very hair seemed to grow redder as Molly spoke.

"It 's meanness of spirit," pursued the quickened Bats, "to quarrel about a trinket like that, Phin. All such knick-knacks are the fair perquisites of the captain for expenses and news upon the road."

"Well said, Bats!" and Molly smiled graciously upon the talking snake about to sting her.

"To be sure; I shouldn't wonder if the captain means to give that watch to the blue-eyed girl at the Plough. She 's a kind thing, and the captain loves blue eyes, Phin: he says they 're so innocent."

Egypt's asp was not a surer reptile than Bats. Molly, struck to the heart, where an old, old wound was festering, sprang to the earth, quivering, like an arrow newly fixed, with passion. Her eyes looked molten with rage, her large throat dilated to a pillar; her coal-black tresses were stirred as by the air, and her lips moving with inarticulate sounds, she leapt like a cat on Skinks, and tearing the watch from his pocket, with the swing of an Amazon dashed it to the floor. Skinks jumped to his feet, whilst the wheels of the repeater prettily described circles around him. It is the privilege of beauty to kill time.

Skinks could ordinarily master his feelings, but not when bound up with a gold watch and chain. He applied a terribly significant monosyllable to Molly, and with his clenched mallet-power fist, struck—

Whimper not, sweet Cupid! Dry thine eyes, and feed thy mother's doves—and thou, fair Venus, shriek not a second shriek—and ye, eternal Graces, huddle not, like frighted fowl,

together. The face of Molly was not profaned; at his last public hour Skinks was spared that tighter pang; for, happily, Bats rushing before the fair, received on his more appropriate nose a blow that fairly pasted it to his cheeks. Down, of course, he fell; but falling, cushioned his *os sacrum* on the belly of Pippins, who, by the profoundest grunt, acknowledged the deposit. But the blood of Bats, as might be seen from his nose, was up, and in a second so was Bats himself. Seizing a bludgeon, nearly as hard as Skinks's fist, he made at his assailant; when Molly—we will not stay to analyse the mixed feelings of gratitude and love that moved her—clawed up the draught-board, and striking it with vehement precision on the skull of her preserver, she split the checkered tablet, holding the astonished Bats, like an unruly pig in a collar of wood. Had Skinks been a common man, he might have struck his powerless foe; but Skinks had magnanimity; and tickled by the dilemma of his enemy, he roared a laugh; and Mortlake and Phineas, like true courtiers, joined in chorus. Bats dropt his club, and wiped his nose. Molly, releasing her prisoner, folded her arms, and with the look of an injured empress, sank, wordless, on a tub. Bats still tried coaxingly to raise his nose, though looking as he would not have objected to a new one, cut by Taliacotian cunning from the heart of Skinks.

The impressive sound uttered by Pippins on the fall of Bats, awakened the attention of the captain to the sleeper, "Where did you pick him up, Bats?" asked Skinks, in a most honied tone. Bats was not to be mollified by such peculiar attention: still his soul rankled with his late injury, still he glared, and, silent still, he tried to raise his nose. Phineas gave the necessary information; in few words condensed the protestation of Job as to the accident which had possessed him of the watch, and then, with a speaking wink of the eye, pointed to the bloody napkin!

"Got it honestly, eh?" cried Skinks, with the smile of a Judas. "Ha! the thief's above his business. Pick up the pieces, Phin;" and he pointed to two or three fragments of the watch glittering on the floor. "Let 's look at his honest face," and the obedient Phineas turned Job upon his back, Job having rolled over when relieved of Bats. Skinks took a burning brand from the logs, and stooping near Job's feet, stretched it within singeing distance of his cheek. "Ha! ha! ha! an old bird, my lads. I know him as I know my nails—a nursery thief—a bread-and-butter footpad. Why, he was tried at York for stealing a coral and bells from the mayoress's baby. I saw him in the dock; somehow there was a crack in the indictment, and Bill Ticket—for that 's his name—crept safely through."

It is to be feared that when nature made Job Pippins she did not break the die, but in the same mould made one William Ticket; for that the story of Skinks was cold, malicious slander we cannot believe. No; in taking to himself the property of Pippins, he was sustained by the virtuous conviction that he was punishing a too lucky, a too dissimulating thief. William Ticket was despoiled, happily for Ticket, in the person of Job Pippins.

"I 'll tell ye what we 'll do," said Skinks, oracularly; "we'll"—

"Ugh!" roared Pippins, flinging up his legs as though under a galvanic battery; the toes of his thick-soled shoes striking the under jaw of Skinks against its superior brother, like a plate of iron. Skinks blasphemed; and Bats, with a smile, at length took his fingers from his nose.

Job was not a salamander; a spark from the blazing wood had lighted on his cheek, as the too near Skinks was about to pass sentence—a sentence, we fear, in which the jaw of the judge was thereupon made more evident than his justice.

Sentence was passed; immediately carried into execution; and where, and in what state was the culprit; where was Job?

CHAPTER VI.

It was a pleasant morning in the month of fickle April; the sun was up in his brightness—the fields steamed with odours—the birds sang and twittered—the limping hare now hopped along the mead, and now sat and licked her dewy paws—the rooks cawed their sweet domestic cares—the hedgehog rejoiced in his new-warmed blood—the snail, like creeping envy, crawled its slimy way—the lambkins frisked, and still Job Pippins slept.

Thy hand, reader; step this way. Thou art in a most delicious meadow, within three yards of the sleeper. See yon dry ditch; there—there lies Pippins!

We paused, and our heart rose within us as we looked upon the dreamer. Touched by the softening influence of the season—for in spring-time the hardest heart may become a ball of honey—we exclaimed, "Ha! here is penniless worth upon its couch of nettles; thorns at its side, nightshade at its head, and crawling, creeping creatures round about. Poor soul! The toad still squats at thine ear, and the raven is thy constant serenader!" Saying this, we walked on rejoicing.

Job woke, and as he woke his temples were pierced by nails

driven to the head by one short stroke, and then some half-dozen lancets were struck into his skull, and his eyes were turned to two lenses, burning hot, and his tongue was an unmanageable bit of hard, dry leather, retaining a high flavour of the tan. In daily prose, Job felt the last night's liquor.

Job was in his shirt; and, that "most domestic" vestment was stained with accusing blots of blood. Whether he had merely assisted at a tragedy, or had been a principal, was a doubt that, for a second, withered him like lightning. Then it all came upon him—the hut—Molly—the drink—the—the—and then he passed into that confine where darkness swallows all things. An insect ticked its little note. "The watch!" cried Job, and stood upon his feet; the trees, and fields, and herds, whirling round him—and the blood glaring like red fire—and Job, gaspingly applying his hand to his flesh, and feeling that at least he ought to have a very serious wound.

It was, we say, a balmy day in April, when Job Pippins, reduced to his last garment, stood in a field with the wide world about him. Hatless, shoeless, hoseless, he stood upon the grass, the bold zephyrs playing with his shirt—his tattered flag of terrible distress. And Job began to feel the sickness of hunger; he looked at the cows, and yearned for his breakfast. Job resolved and re-resolved. Should he try to regain the hut, whence he had been so inhospitably sprited? Then he thought, what availed a naked man against four men and one woman? Should he run to the first house and publish the whole story? Again, who would put faith in a man with so slender a wardrobe? At this moment of indecision, a bull in the next field, annoyed or scandalised at the sanguine blots of Job, leapt the low fence, and unhesitatingly ran at him. Job paused no longer, but made for the next meadow, and scaling a five-barred gate, saved himself in the main road, the bull shaking his horns, and casting a reproachful look at the fugitive. The destitution of Job was perfect, as he thought, without a new affliction; a few seconds before, and he could have dared fate to do worse, in the firm belief of its impotence. Vain, blind man! He was then the sole proprietor of a whole shirt; and now he stood in the London road, with almost all the hinder part of his one garment impaled on the dead brambles surmounting the fatal five-barred gate. The retreat of Job was most ignominious; he had not even saved his colours.

Job stood in the road, his heart sinking deeper and deeper still, as he wistfully beheld his tattered property held by the thorns, and still vigilantly guarded by the bull, who to Job looked as though he felt the full importance of the trophy. Job at length

with a disdainful action turned his back upon the bull, who took the insult with the most commendable philosophy.

And now, thinks the reader, Job is at the zero of his fortune. He is naked, hungry, penniless, and where shall he find a friend? The river—yonder river, that like a silver thread intersects those emerald fields—that shall be unto him clothes, meat, and lodging. Mercy on us! Suicide? No, no; Job had a just value of life: when it was only worth throwing away, his opinion was, that nothing further could hurt it. The river, it will be seen, was Job's Pactolus.

Quitting his foe, Job made for the stream, while his memory peopled its banks with a hundred racing, leaping, shouting schoolfellows, with whom, despising birch—despising the deep moral of the primer tale, in which the impartial pedagogue flogged alike for swimming and for sinking—Job was wont, in boyish days, to dive. Job sighed as he thought of those happy, reckless hours: then what was a shirt to him? His father bought it, and his mother made it.

Job crawled and slinked across the field, and was already among a clump of alders, overhanging the stream. Was the great enemy of man cooling his burning limbs in the bright waters? Or had some pitying angel, softened by the nakedness of Job, alighted among the trees? Was it a temptation of the devil, or was it the beneficent gift of a kind spirit? Job was perplexed: well he might be.

Reader, put thyself in the moiety of the shirt worn by Job; think thyself thus naked, weary, hungry, destitute; and then imagine a very handsome suit of clothes—hat—gloves—shoes—walking-cane—all that "makes the happy man," lying, a golden waif, at thy foot,—no visible second person near. What wouldst thou do? Hear what Job did.

Job sat himself upon the grass, changed his equivocal shirt for the ample piece of ruffled "aired snow" before him, tried an experiment with the shoes and stockings, which answered the fondest hopes of the essayist,—girded his loins with the providential pair of breeches—donned the vest and coat,—took his—yes, *his*—hat, gloves, and stick, placing the cravat in his pocket, to be tied in moments of better leisure, and—Job was always a fast walker—in three minutes Job was again in the main road. Again he passed the noted gate: there stood the bull, his glaring eye still upon the remnant of the shirt. As Job glanced at the rag, he flourished his cane, and smiled supreme contempt.

Job journeying onward, something weighty struck at his leg. He put his hand in his coat pocket, and pulled out a purse; it contained eight guineas and as many dollars. This was too

much ; Job sank against a tree, and overcome, one hand holding the purse, and the other placed upon his heart, thanked Providence !

How long Job might have dwelt in the grateful reverie we know not, had he not been disturbed in his thanksgiving by the noise of an approaching cart rattling along at full speed. Two men were in it, who, as they passed, greeted Job with a wondering whoop ; and one of them added to the exclamation the following curious enquiry—"I say, Bill Ticket, when did you cut your teeth ?"

"It 's plain," thought Job, "the clothes belong to one Ticket." Job paused—he had surely seen the men before ; and yet they passed so rapidly, that—but then Job was not aware that, possibly they were going to see a swimming-match—a very private meeting—between a young Oxonian and the Dolphin. We know not that such was really their destination—we can only speak to the match.

As the suit worn by Job had a local reputation, he saw, with unaffected pleasure, a returned post-chaise halt when near him, and heard the postilion ask his honour "if he 'd ride ?" Job entered the chaise, pulled down the curtains, and went whirling off to the next town, a distance of ten miles. At least twenty times, in the solitude of his carriage, Job pulled out his purse, and counted his money.

The postilion had orders to stop outside the town : Job had business in a neighbouring village. There, he thought, he would calmly pass the day—it was yet early morning—and at nightfall travel towards London. Job had not breakfasted, and, as he crossed a bridge, the inn on the opposite side seemed to open its doors wider to receive him. At the instant he heard a shriek, and looking, saw a girl tearing her hair, and clapping her hands, and pointing to what seemed a mere ball in the water, though, on closer inspection, it appeared to Job a child's head. Job leapt into the stream, and swam in the direction of the child, whose neck was all but in the grasp of his preserver, when, for the last time, it sank. Job—the tailor had made his coat somewhat too tight under the arms—though an expert swimmer, was trammeled in his movements ; he dived and he dived, as though in a well he was diving for truth, and still like many divers therein, brought up nothing. Again he went down, and he rose with the body of Augustus Faddle, son and heir of Nicholas Faddle, Esq., proprietor of yonder splendid mansion, Ladybird Lodge—that mansion, with the lawn sweeping down to the water's edge.

CHAPTER VII.

"A PERFECT gentleman! the fineness of his linen declares that," exclaimed the laundress of Ladybird Lodge, talking of Job, at the time a distinguished tenant of the best bed-room of the house. "A perfect gentleman! you might draw his shirt through a wedding-ring!"

"I wonder if he 's married," said an under-maid, looking at the footman.

"Swims like a duck," replied the inconsequential functionary.

"If Master Augustus had been drowned, what a shocking thing! And to-morrow, too, with such a dinner for his birth-day!"

"Well, I suppose the gentleman will stay to dinner. I 'm sure if he could eat gold, it isn't too good for him."

The above is a brief extract of a conversation, animatedly pursued in the servants' hall, on the philanthropic swimmer put to bed in the Blue Room—Nicholas Faddle, Esq., hovering about the providential visitor, with clasped hands, and all but streaming eyes, and now calling him the guardian angel of his race, and now recommending another half fowl—(Job breakfasted in bed,)—and now insisting on a few more layers of hot blankets. It was in vain that Job again and again bulletined his convalescence; the grateful father insisted that, after so generous an action, he must be greatly exhausted. Then Mr. Faddle rang for more coffee and toast—then he rushed to the next room to clasp the little Augustus, preserved from a watery grave, and now pickled with hot salt—then he returned to Job, and vehemently declared that the doctor—the family doctor—must see him.

"A clever man—practice of two thousand a-year—an extraordinary man. Dr. Saffron—you have heard of Dr. Saffron?" Job had heard the name; but, we fear, doubted his skill, for he resolutely declared his determination not to see him. "If he had done anything to serve Mr. Faddle he was glad of it—but he had a mortal antipathy to all doctors."

"Well, well! Yet if you 'd only let him feel your pulse, and show him your tongue." Job frowned, and bit his lip. "Enough—I wont press it; but if you should catch cold after saving my blessed child—where *are* the hot blankets?" And Faddle snatched at the bell with most benevolent fury; he then ran out, and Job finished his first fowl, and tenth cup of coffee. And

still he ate, luxuriously pressing a bed of down, over-canopied with rose-coloured silk. At length, somewhat appeased, Job sat up in the bed, and was beginning to contemplate, when the too careful Faddle re-entered the room, bringing with him the infallible Doctor Saffron. Instantaneously, Job dived into the eider, as though it was another stream, and another child sinking within it.

"Forgive me, I can't help it. My dear friend, do speak to the doctor—do"—Job maintained a dignified silence. "Well, then, only your pulse and your tongue. You may be ill and not know it—mayn't he, doctor?"

"Nothing more likely," said the wise Saffron.

"I ask no more—only your pulse and your tongue."

Job, finding there was no escape, ventured to put out his arm —Saffron pressed it, taking out his watch—Job felt a qualm as he heard the tick-tick of the repeater. "Humph!" said Saffron, releasing the limb; "if you please sir, your tongue?"

Job now adroitly pulled his night-cap—a gorgeous family affair, with a most exuberant tassel—down to the tip of his nose; and drawing close up to his under lip the snowy sheet, he resignedly dropt his tongue upon it. With a keen imposing eye, Saffron pondered that most musical organ.

"Ha—furred"—he said—"much furred. Yes—the effect of the water."

Job said nothing; but he thought gin-and-water.

"Well, sir," proceeded Saffron to the all but invisible Job, "we must have a few ounces of blood."

Job shook his head and drew his mouth into an eyelet hole.

"Now, do—pray, do let the doctor bleed you," and Faddle rang the bell. "Pray do—lives like yours, my dear kind sir, are not—bid Nancy bring a basin—I say, lives like yours are not to be trifled with. Indeed," and Faddle spake with the most winning modulation of tone, "indeed, the doctor must bleed you."

Still Job shook his head, but the invincible Saffron stood with his ready weapon. "Some practitioners, sir, would await the slow operation of aperients; but in cases such as these, I always attack the bowels with the lancet."

"To be sure," acquiesced Faddle, his own bowels being no party to the operation.

"This way, Nancy," said Saffron; and a serious-looking damsel, with a very handsome china bowl, a piece of Nankin worthy of the blood of Pippins, approached the bed. "Now, sir, your arm, if you please—never been bled perhaps? 'tis nothing—nothing I assure you—'twill not confine you—no you may get up to dinner."

"I should hope so," said Faddle; "and, doctor, you dine with us to-day, of course?"

It was with some anxiety, that Job awaited the answer of the man of life and death.

"And to-morrow—certainly," said Saffron.

A groan died in Job's throat, and with the resignation of a martyr he extended his arm. So long as the doctor remained in the house, so long Job felt he must be very ill, and keep his bed.

"Beautiful—beautiful," cried the encouraging and self-complacent Saffron, as Job's blood fell like a rivulet into the basin, Nancy becoming whiter with every drop. "Beautiful," and Saffron looked as a miser would look at molten gold. "There is nothing like bleeding, Mr. Faddle—only last night Sir Scipio Mannikin was saved by it—pray keep your arm still, sir—yes, Sir Scipio should raise a tablet to the lancet."

"Razor," thought Job.

"Sir Scipio!" cried Faddle, "he's Augustus's godfather—he dines with me to-morrow."

"No shivers, I hope?" kindly inquired Saffron of the patient, seeing the bed begin to shake under him. "No shivers?" Job pursed his mouth into a negative, and continued to shake.

"It's impossible he should come," said Saffron, "though he's out of danger, thanks—thanks to a providential accident that threw me near him in the hour of peril. Steady, Nancy. Apoplexy."

"And, of course," asked Faddle, "you bled him?"

"Of course he was bled," responded Saffron.

"Any more news of *that* affair?" questioned Faddle in a low significant tone.

"What, the—the barber?" and Saffron leered and gave a shrug.

"For myself," said the liberal Faddle, "I don't believe the scandalous rumours of wicked people. I think her ladyship, though merely the daughter of respectable people, and married from a third-rate boarding school, I think her incapable of—by the way, doctor, what sort of fellow is this Pippins?"

"You never saw him? Oh,—a—a—"

"Good looking, I hear?"

"Why, women have odd tastes, Mr. Faddle. I don't see much beauty in a narrow sloping forehead, high cheek bones, freckled skin, a nose stolen from a pug, and eyes that belong to a fish. How do you feel now, sir?" asked the doctor of Job.

Job set his teeth, and with some difficulty at self-command, nodded his head.

"I knew you'd be better. As I say, happily for the ugly, women have odd tastes. For my own part, and I trust I am as far above prejudice as any man—for my own part, I should be sorry to be upon a jury, with only the evidence of his looks."

"It's very odd—I hear a subscription has been raised for him?" said Faddle.

"Shouldn't wonder if the women give him a piece of plate—that is, if he be not hanged before 'tis ready. For they 're after him."

"Why, nothing new?—nothing?—"

"Oh, I don't know what hasn't been missed since he was last at the Hall—and only last evening—but by-and-bye you shall know the whole affair. All I say is this; I devoutly hope the scoundrel will be hanged! How do you feel now, sir?" gently enquired the doctor.

"How do you feel now?" softly sounded Faddle.

"Fainted—fainted!" cried Saffron: "water, Nancy—water—and that thick cap—away with it," and Saffron's own hand was stretched to grasp the tassel, and in another half second the face of Job would have lain bare before its libeller, had not the patient resolutely griped his head-dress, and shouted, "Better—much better—very well, indeed."

"I told you so," said the satisfied Saffron—"now, you see," he added with the look and tone of a triumphant demonstrator—"now, you see what bleeding is. Take away, Nancy," and Saffron bandaged the arm. Nancy bore away the blood, and was soon beset by the anxious servants. They seemed to gather around the bowl like spirits evoked by a German wizard. The under-butler shut his eyes, nodded, and said—"It 's very plain—he 's a gentleman born." In matters of blood, the wisest of heralds have had their blunders—let us not then ask too much of an under-butler. Return we to the patient.

"He had better keep his bed to-day?" asked Faddle, benevolently.

"Yes—to-day," sentenced Saffron.

"What may he take?"

"Let me see. Why, to-day, I should say he may take—a—whatever he likes."

"What! with the beginning of a fever?"

"My system," said the emphatic Saffron. "If what he eats does him no harm, 'tis plain he 's better; if, on the other hand, it does him harm, to-morrow the symptoms will be stronger, and we shall have the surer authority to go upon."

So saying, Dr. Saffron took his hat and cane, and returned to the convalescent Augustus.

Faddle crept closer to the patient. "My best friend—the preserver of my child, the saviour of my house—what would you like to take?"

Job replied, with a tremulous voice, "A glass of rum and water, hot, with sugar."

It was a fanciful wish for a feverish patient; but it was complied with to the letter—no, not to the letter. With the guest of Jonathan Bradford at the Oxford inn, Job Pippins

"—said not it a lemon he would like;"

but the under-butler, like the aforesaid provident Jonathan, in the simple language of the dramatic poet,—

"Brought one."

And now, draw the curtains, and tread softly, for Job is sleeping. At his earnest desire, he had had a private interview with Jacob Gorse, the man especially ordained to paddle Augustus in the boat, but whose wilful negligence had endangered the child's life, and lost to himself his place at Ladybird Lodge. Job, we say, talked to Jacob ere he was thrust from the door. What he said to him here matters not; doubtless he gave him some golden rule for his future days—some amulet to wear at his breast—some phylactery to bind around his brow. Job slept; he slept in down; and he who but in the morning was shirtless, and "couldn't help it," was now guarded as the eye and heart of a princely house—a jewel—a talisman—a wonder-worker; nor "could he help it."

Had he dived in his half-shirt, would he have slept in the Blue Room?

CHAPTER VIII.

The next morning all was animation in and about Ladybird Lodge. The birth-day of Augustus was to be solemnised with unusual splendour. At an early hour, Faddle, the grateful father, was at the bed-side of Job, who declared himself unable to join the dinner-party, at which, next to the epergne presented to the host for his breed of bulls, Job was expected to be the principal attraction.

"And was ever anything so unfortunate? Dr. Saffron can't see you: he has been up all night with Lady Gemini, and doesn't,

he writes, expect to get away before to-morrow. He can't come."

"Do you know, I think I 'll try to join you." Faddle pressed the hands of Job between his own. "Yes, I—I think I shall be well enough ; but—but"—

"Very true ; your wardrobe"——

"Quite spoilt—impossible that I can wear anything again."

"Of course, of course. Let me see—will you pardon what I am about to say ? I have a suit ; I 'm sure 'twill fit you—'twas made for me. I never wore it but once—when I was sheriff, and took an address to court. I may say it—a handsome thing ; a chocolate cut velvet, with flowers down the skirts, and nosegays embroidered at the pocket-holes ;—breeches to match—and white satin waistcoat, flourished with gold. I 'm sure they 'll fit you—ha ! I was much thinner then—sure they 'll fit you."

Faddle, exalted with the project, ran from the chamber in pursuit of his plan.

We pass the process of the toilet. Enough for the reader, i. we present him to Job Pippins—otherwise, John Jewel, Esq., arrayed in the very court-suit of the ex-sheriff of the county—a suit originally purchased in the vain expectation of knighthood. Whatever may have been the suspicions of the frank and overflowing Faddle, the portrait drawn of Pippins by the hand of Saffron made the masquerade perfectly secure ; for Job looked and moved a new-made count. Had not the dinner-bell summoned him away, Job had pined, a new Narcissus, at the mirror. But the truth is, he was a remarkably pretty fellow—a truth published by the general stir and simper of a bevy of ladies, gathered to do honour to the natal day of Augustus, and, incidentally, to reward, with gentle words and sweetest smiles, his happy life-preserver. Job wore his arm in a sling—an additional and touching claim to the sensibilities of the women. As he entered the room, and cast his eyes bashfully around him, there was in his face a look of confusion, which, though it might with some take from his breeding, with others it added considerably to his merit. A cynical male guest whispered to his companion—"The fellow is looking round for applause." Perish all such ill-nature like a pestilent weed ! When Job looked round, he look timidly for Doctor Saffron.

Job had suffered, as he thought, the whole round of introduction, when Faddle brought him to a young fellow, who, for limb and figure, might have passed for Job's twin-brother.

"My dear Mr. Jewel, I must make my friend Frank Triton know you : your tastes, your accomplishments, must, I am sure, most closely ally you."

Job and Frank mutually bowed, when Faddle, in a sort of trumpet-whisper, audible throughout the room, applied his mouth to Job's ear—

"Splendid fellow! he 's almost beat the Dolphin."

Job bowed still lower to the possible conqueror of such an adversary.

"Beat the Dolphin; but—by-and-bye"——And Faddle significantly lifted up his fore-finger, and smothered a chuckle, sliding off to an unexpected guest, introduced by Frank.

"Mr. Jewel, Mr. Wigmore."

Mr. Wigmore raised his broad back a hair's-breadth from the mantel-piece, and having "thrown his head" at Job, returned to his easy position. He was certainly less polished in his look and manner than any of the company, and yet Job felt less at ease before him. The women—bless them!—fluttered around Job, and still his bravery was the theme of their silver tongues. For the ten thousandth time, Mrs. Faddle, as a mother, thanked him; and then grandmothers, aunts, cousins, all put in their peculiar claims to thank him in their various capacities. Then came enquiries touching his health. How was his head—how was his arm—how was his fever? To all such queries, Job, considering the shortness of the notice, replied very gracefully—

"Quite well, I thank you." At last, by the number of questions confused and bewildered, Job, without knowing when he answered, or to whom he replied, bowed mechanically, and still said—

"Quite well, I thank you."

A dead silence for a second ensued, and Job found himself in front of Mr. Wigmore.

"How 's your gums, sir?"

"Quite well, I thank you."

General attention was drawn upon Mr. Wigmore, who, insensible as a target, received the eyes of the company. A titter crept through the room, and some of the men laughed outright.

"It was only yesterday a fellow asked about my teeth," thought Job. And he looked timidly in the dead-wall face of Wigmore. It was an anxious moment for Job, when, happily for him, the servant arrived, and Mrs. Faddle was led to her chair by Job Pippins John Jewel, Esq.

The dinner began with more than ordinary gravity. That great event of every twenty-four hours received, on the present occasion, its more than legitimate attention at Ladybird Lodge. Job acquitted himself with praiseworthy elegance and heartiness, and whilst one fair feeder whispered of his grace, Mr. Wigmore loudly complimented him on his appetite. Faddle, and not for the first time, wondered why Frank had brought his friend. But

Job, it must be owned, was all watchful politeness; and he had his reward. Dr. Lullaby, an exemplary clergyman of eighteen stone, sat near the turtle. Thrice the doctor had been helped. and still he sat with one eye slumbering on the last ladlefull. Often he wished to ask, and as often repressed the ignoble weakness. Job saw the internal struggle. Again the doctor turned to gaze—sighed—and was about to turn away his head for ever, when Job, with the dexterous hand of a juggler, seized the ladle, and ere the doctor could wink, its contents lay melting in his plate. The doctor's face was radiant with pleasure; and thrusting his right hand under the table, he clawed hold of the hand of Job, and squeezing it until the knuckles cracked like walnuts, he cried in a subdued voice, spasmodic with delight, shaking on the last word—"That 's—that 's—friendly!"

Nothing of further import occurred until a splendid turbot mutely put in its claims for applause. They were briefly acknowledged by the doctor.—"This fish, Mr. Faddle, was caught in a silver net."

"I think it is the finest fish that swims," rashly observed Frank Triton.

"What! better than the Dolphin?" asked Faddle, with the thrust of a gladiator.

"Ha! ha! ha!" roared Wigmore; and a timid lady, only six months a widow, jumped in her chair, as in a menagerie a lady may jump unconsciously too near the bars.

"What *is* this about the Dolphin?" asked Mrs. Faddle, with the eyes of wondering innocence. Faddle gave a sidelong look at Triton, who returned an expostulatory glance, and Mrs. Faddle sat unanswered.

"Do you know, sir,"—and Wigmore, in thorough bass, addressed Pippins—"do you know, sir, how they are going on with the pearl fishery?"

"Not the slightest notion," said Pippins, with new-born dignity.

"It must be a very hazardous employment for the poor men," remarked the widow.

"Not at all," said Triton—"not at all—for they only employ such as are predestined the other way."

"Is that true, sir?" said Wigmore to Job, appealing to him as a first authority.

"I should think the fishery doesn 't employ all such," said Job, blindly aiming at what he thought might prove a hit. Faddle rubbed his hands; the doctor hemmed, and Wigmore, for a second, wrinkled his brow.

"For my part," said the widow, with a recollection of youth, "I prefer pearls to diamonds."

"Which would you take, sir?" said Job, becoming in his turn assailant, to Wigmore.

"Oh, I should certainly take," replied Wigmore, smiling a grim gallantry, "whatever the lady took."

"Then I say, pearls," concluded the widow.

"Pearls," decided Wigmore: and again he put a smile into his face that would have dissolved Cleopatra's union. Then turning round to Pippins, he bluntly asked—"What do you think of coral, sir?"

"Really, Wigmore," interposed Triton, feeling tender for his own reputation, "you catechise Mr. Jewel as though he were a merman."

"Very right—very right, Frank. Pearls and diamonds!—he has saved the richest pearl for me, and all I say is,—and what I expect my friends to say is,—God bless him!"—and something of the father stole into Faddle's eye, and his wife looked with all her heart in her face as she turned to Job.

"Ha! you should have seen Mr. Jewel. I 'm told he dived, and dived like—like"—

"Like a Dolphin," said a young fellow, wickedly supplying the simile. Again the men shouted, and the women wondered—and Faddle, looking with a laughing desperation at Triton, cried—

"I 'm blest if I don't tell it." Triton after many unsuccessful appeals, resigned himself into the hands of Faddle. "You have heard of the man we call the Dolphin—I beg your pardon, Mr. Jewel, you 're a stranger—well, we have a fellow here, who, I really think, could swim against a whale. However, my friend Frank thought himself a match for him, and—ha! ha!—yesterday morning, it was agreed that nobody should know it, and with only one for an umpire, the match was to be decided. Well, though Frank was only next to the Dolphin himself, he hadn't a chance; and so he was about to return to his mother earth, when he found that the water nymphs—the pretty river-goddesses with their 'pearled wrists,' as Mr. Milton says, I remember—conspired to 'take him in.' And how do you think they managed? Why, they had stolen his clothes." The gentlemen shouted again at this reduction of Frank to a state of innocence, but the women, by their staid looks, clearly thought it no joke. By the way, Pippins indulged in no unseemly merriment.

"True, Mr. Jewel, true—in other words, some hang-dog thief had run away with them." Job's jaw fell like the jaw of a dead man, and he sat as upon one entire and perfect blister.

"They hadn't left him—ha! ha! ha!—they"—and here Faddle, with praiseworthy prudence, put the edge of his hand to one side of his mouth that the intelligence might reach Job's private ear

alone—"they hadn't left him even a shirt"—Job's teeth chattered —"no not even half a shirt." Job

"Thought of the murders of a five-barred gate,"

and the table, and the guests spun round, and he distinguished no face, save the face of Wigmore looking sternly at him.

"Ar'n't you well?" cried Mrs. Faddle, and there was a general move towards Job.

"It 's my fault! I would make him come down. Is it your head, Mr. Jewel?" said Faddle.

"Is it your arm?" compassionately asked the widow.

"Is it," asked Wigmore, we mean Captain Skinks—for it was he, indeed—"is it your teeth?" And as he put the question, his fingers played with the chain of Sir Scipio's repeater.

"Thank goodness!" and Mrs. Faddle pointed to the object without—"Thank goodness! here 's Doctor Saffron on his horse!"

"My bed—my bed!" roared Job, and he leapt up, and actually fought his way through the guests—gained his room—and bounced between the sheets.

Dr. Saffron lost no time, but immediately followed Mr. Jewel. Again the doctor had his finger on Job's pulse—and again Job wore his nightcap down.

"Humph! I think—I"——

CHAPTER IX.

"I THINK—I think," repeated Doctor Saffron, his fingers still upon Job's pulse,—"I think it was very fortunate I came." Now, whatever Job thought, he said nothing. Saffron rose from his seat, stroked his chin, thrust his hands in his pockets, and pronounced sentence—"A little more blood."

"I thought so," said Faddle, and beneficently smiling, he added —"Nancy, a basin."

"Some sixteen ounces, and a blister on the chest," said Saffron. "Yes, that will do for to-night."

"His dinner couldn't have hurt him; he was only helped three times to haunch," said Faddle, piteously.

"Well, I promise you," protested Saffron with more than professional earnestness, "if he isn't much better to-morrow, I 'll shave his head." Faddle pressed the doctor's hand in token of thanksgiving. "You have pigeons at hand, I hope?"

"You know we're very fond of 'em, doctor. But you can tell best—would they quite agree with his stomach?"

"Stomach pooh—soles of his feet. If we don't take great care," and Saffron lowered his voice to a most confidential tone, "if we don't take great care, this may be a case for Doctor Lullaby." Faddle winced—"I tell you, there is no time to be lost." At this moment Nancy made her appearance with a riband and the fatal china bowl. Again Saffron stood ready with his lancet, again he was about to approach the sufferer, when he was chained to the spot by the loud snores of the patient. "Bless me! he's asleep," cried Faddle, and again Job snored in corroboration; the very curtain rings vibrated with the sound. "You'll never wake him?" asked Faddle, as Saffron laid his hands upon the bed clothes; "won't sleep do him good, doctor?"

"Quite cure him," replied Saffron, with a sarcastic smile. "Six hours of such sleep, and he'll want none of my help." And Job snored with greater vehemence. "Don't be deceived by that," said the doctor to the host, "I've heard many a patient do that, and, I give you my honour, with all my care, it has turned into the sleep of death."

"Well, I thought sleep must be a very balm," said the superficial Faddle.

"And so it is," sharply returned the doctor, "but in some cases balm is the deadliest poison: this is one of them. Sir—Sir," and the doctor shouted to Job, when a gentle knock was heard at the door. The footman, with a fine respect for the sick man's chamber, only edged in his cheek, and in the softest voice begged to ask whether the doctor would be able to attend the dinner-table, or whether a cover should be put aside for him?

Saffron, absorbed by his professional duties, apparently gave no ear to the mission; but pausing near his patient, who continued at a short notice to perform wonders, for every snore was an improvement in body and tone on its predecessor,—the doctor's face bent into a smile, and he resorted to his snuff-box, and observed—"Ha! well—that is better—yes, much better. What did you say?" and he turned to the still lingering footman, who repeated the question.

"I think, friend Faddle, we may venture to leave him for a few minutes?—but, hark ye, Nancy, let me be called, if there's the slightest alteration." Still Job snored, and still the doctor, until beyond ear-shot, applauded every note with—"that's well—better—better—better."

When the doctor appeared in the drawing-room, every voice—save the *ferrea vox* of Skinks, alias Wigmore—cried for news of the patient. Saffron answered in general terms, which, trans-

lated into particular replies, assured the enquirers, that if Mr. Jewel recovered, he would no doubt live ;—if his disease proved mortal, there was as little doubt he would die: and that these were most learned deductions was evident from the fact that everybody seemed perfectly satisfied with them.

In a very, very brief time the patient of the Blue Room was well-nigh forgotten by at least nineteen out of twenty of the guests, Doctor Saffron almost included. And yet, there was one —one who thought of Job—one whose appetite had been struck dead at the tenth mouthful at what the doctor called his dangerous relapse. The fair widow—none of your silly spinsters with hearts like green oranges—had a heart, soft and ripe as a medlar. Whether from having lived with, and buried, a husband thirty years older than herself, she had become a deeper thinker —had acquired a keener vision into the soul of things than many of her evenly-paired acquaintance, we know not enough of young widows to decide: but of this we are certain ; she had, from the first, appreciated the merits of Job at their golden value. Five feet ten inches—a handsome face—apparent good temper, and, despite the doctor, sound constitution, were not lost upon a woman of her experience. "She was not a maudlin girl," as her own maid ingenuously avowed, "to give herself red eyes for a bread-and butter face and curly hair." With the widow, the whiskers of Mars were of greater worth than the locks of Adonis.

The business of the table proceeded in all its tumult, when the widow, seated next to Doctor Saffron—he had attended her poor husband in his last illness, and she felt a great confidence in him—ventured to put a list of queries touching the sufferer, as she tenderly thought him, up stairs. The doctor was a man of system, and cared not to have his patients laid upon the dinner-table. Moreover, in the present instance, he was ferociously hungry ; having been well-nigh worn out in his late attendance on Lady Gemini—whose medicine, by the way, at that moment haunted him.

"And, my dear doctor, going on well, you say ?"

Turning the drum-stick of a goose in his mouth, he replied— "Well as can be expected ;" never taking into account the extra-ordinary expectations of some people.

"You think there 's nothing serious in the case ?"

"Serious! no—not at all. I 've—with great pleasure "—and Saffron honoured a challenge to wine—"I 've sent for a nurse," and again he filled his mouth with goose.

"A nurse !" cried the widow, "so bad as that ?"

"Your dear friend, Lady Gemini—hasn't Mr. Faddle told you ? At last, a charming little boy."

"Very true—I never was so delighted to hear any thing. But the preserver of our little boy?"

"He 's—he 's in bed;" and Saffron, becoming restless under the examination, turned from the widow and rolled his eyes up and down the table. At last they lighted upon a huge turkey.

"And—and dear doctor, what may be his complaint?"

"The breast," said Saffron to the carver of the bird.

There was a brief pause—the doctor's plate was filled—a delicious collop was on the doctor's fork—the fork near his mouth—his mouth gaping, when, with a long-drawn sigh, down fell the head of the widow on the doctor's shoulder. There was a general stir at the table—a general cry of "fainted!" A magistrate chewing his meat, authoritatively pronounced — "decidedly fainted." Wigmore instantly carried the widow from the room, followed by the hostess and another female friend, who relentlessly urged the doctor from his plate. In a moment of desperate disappointment, Saffron could have thrown up his diploma, so that he might have executed his dinner.

"Was ever anything so unlucky!" said the host. "First that Mr. Jewel should be ill, and then that Mrs."——

"Sympathy," said Triton, with a wink of wickedness. "Sympathy."

"Don't, Frank," cried a dear female friend of the widow, benevolently strangling a laugh. "Don't." But we are forgetting what is due to the new patient.

"We had better get her to bed," said the doctor, with the down look of an injured man.

"The Cane Room," said Mrs. Faddle, and one of the servants led the way. Wigmore ran up stairs with his hysterical burden, and Saffron, with funereal gait and aspect, followed. Wigmore, having surrendered the widow to the doctor and the women, was proceeding to join the company, when, about to pass the door of the adjoining chamber, he recognised the voice of the male patient, at first he thought loudly laughing, but his head yet rang with the hysterics of the widow, and his ear was not sufficiently fine to distinguish the sex of a note. However, once at the door of the sick man, it would have been unkind to pass it; therefore, turning the handle, Wigmore thrust his skull into the room, and, grinning like a shark, asked "If Mr. Ticket was any better?" Nancy was about to speak. "Say Wigmore—Captain Wigmore—called to ask;" and then, with a departing kindness, that quite puzzled the girl—"take care of his teeth."

"Ticket and teeth?" said Nancy, "what can he mean, sir?"

"What can he mean?" cried Job to himself, and again an ague fit came on. In a few minutes another knock at the door, and

Bodkin, the widow's maid, entered flutteringly, fairly sweeping the ground with curtsies. She begged very many thousand pardons, but would Nancy go to her mistress—the doctor was about to bleed her—and for herself, she loved her so much she could not hold the basin ? If the gentleman didn't mind she would stay, in case he might want any thing. Job raised his eye above the counterpane and nodded assent. Exit Nancy.

" And what," asked Job, in a feeble voice, well worthy of cultivation for a representative of the sick, " And what may ail your charming mistress ? "

" I can't tell, sir—the doctor says her complaint is just the same as yours."

" And what is that ? " said Job to himself in great perplexity.

" And I think he called it sym—sympathy. But whatever it is, he says bleeding is the only cure for it. He has bled you, sir "——

" Damn him ! " said Job.

" And he 'll bleed my mistress."

Job said nothing.

" Yes, sir—he said you are both to be treated just alike. He has written home for blisters for two. I hope, sir, you won't let him shave your head—pray don't, sir."

" And why not ? " asked Job, touched by the interest the woman seemed to take in him. " Why not ? "

" Because my mistress has such beautiful hair, and as you're both to be treated alike—Oh, sir ! you should see it out of that filthy cap ; for my part I wouldn't wear a widow's cap to please the best dead man that ever was buried. I "——

Bodkin was arrested in her eloquence by the return of Nancy, who told her she was wanted in the next room. Bodkin, with a mysterious glance at Job, heaved a deep sigh, exclaimed, " My poor mistress ! " and departed.

" In the next room ! " thought Job ; and he fell off into a brown study, which held him tongue-tied for many minutes. When next he spoke, he asked, quite unconscious of the syllables, " Nancy, is she rich ? "

" Very comfortable they say, sir."

" In the next room ! " again thought Job, " and to be treated both alike ! " And the widow's face, despite the dead man's cap, glowed prettily between the curtains.

CHAPTER X.

For three whole days—three anxious nights—were Job and the widow next room neighbours. Their feelings, toned, as the doctor avowed, and as they themselves firmly believed, by the same sickness, sweetly harmonised. They could hear each other cough, and conscious of such advantage, that usually unmusical operation, sublimed by the tender passion, became almost dulcet. Great things have been done upon the Jew's-harp, but they are as nothing to the cough of our widow. Ere the second day was closed, so assiduously had she practised, so frequently had she changed and modulated the note—now coughing *affettuoso*, now *con espressione*, now *allegretto*, and now *fortissimo*—that she was the very nightingale of a cold.

The listening heart of truant Whittington, gave the words it wished to bells. A spirit came through the dewy air of evening—a spirit speaking golden promise—a visible advent of the great future—touched the brain of the little tatterdemalion of Holloway—clapped his little hand, and made his truant feet tread the green meads back to fortune and to London. "Turn again, Whittington!" Thus rang the bells.—"Write, Job Pippins!" Thus coughed the widow.

Job wrote—

"*Blue Room, Ladybird Lodge.*

"Mr. Jewel would feel great happiness at knowing how Mrs. Candy passed the night. Mr. J. has been much concerned at her cough—fears it is very troublesome to her. Can nothing be done to relieve it?"

"*Cane Room, Ladybird Lodge.*

"Mrs. Candy returns her best compliments to Mr. Jewel, and earnestly hopes that he has passed a better night. Has been much interested in his cold—fears that the rookery is too near the Blue Room for a delicate patient. Begs to assure Mr. Jewel that there is no danger in her little cough—she has it every spring. Hopes it has not disturbed the rest of Mr. J."

"*Blue Room, Ladybird Lodge.*

"Dear Madam,—Although I listened all night, I was agreeably disappointed at not hearing you above three times—may I therefore hope on your part for a most refreshing sleep, with

a considerable abatement of cough? I fear that those nasty sparrows were up too early for you this morning. I trust, however, that your complaint has not suffered from their noise.

"Yours, most truly, dear madam,

"JOHN JEWEL.

"P.S. If you have taken all your medicine, mine is not quite out. Need I say it is at your service?"

"*Cane Room, Ladybird Lodge.*

"DEAR SIR,—Your anxiety flatters and distresses me. I would deny the fact—but I have ever been the worshipper of truth. Not once did I close my eyes last night. In happier days, I slept like the lady in the fairy tale. But there are afflictions, there are losses—and since my late bereavement—but let me pass the theme!—I have done.

"I did not sleep—but there were stars in heaven, sir—and there was the vestal brightness of the soft, full moon—and the nightingale was singing in the wood—and the little airs were creeping about my window-panes—and the leaves were tapping at the glass—and there are associations of youth—childhood, I would say—and there are feelings—I mean sentiments—touching emotions, which the bounteousness of nature—oh, Mr. Jewel!—what would this world be without sympathy!

"AGNES CANDY.

"P.S. Could you spare a powder?"

"*Blue Room, Ladybird Lodge.*

"MY DEAREST MADAM,—My heart is torn to inform you that I have no powder left. But I have sent to Mr. Faddle, and horse and man are by this time gone.

"And you were awake all night, and—odd circumstance—so was I! And I was looking at the stars, and thinking whether love was there! And I was gazing at the moon, round and bright as a new wedding-ring! And your name is Agnes! Oh, madam, did you ever see the *Bleeding Nun?* If you have, then have you seen a wounded heart—but I 'll say no more. And yet, what a fool was *Raymond* to run away with a ghost! Should not *I*—I say, should not *I* have known my own, own Agnes?

"Thine ever, my dearest madam,

"JOHN JEWEL.

"P.S. I have now nothing left but one little bottle."

"*Cane Room, Ladybird Lodge.*

"DEAR MR. JEWEL,—Your criticism on the drama does honour alike to your judgment and your feelings. The improbability, so

lucidly developed by your own instinctive goodness, has, I own, often struck me ; but never so fully as now, touched by your diamond of a pen. Oh, sir ! why will you not condescend to write for the stage ? A task so easy—and the reward so great ! For the sake of the expiring drama, *do* forget you are a gentleman, and write a play.

" You spoke of *Raymond* deceived by a shadow. Alas ! hath not many an *Agnes* been alike betrayed ? How many an elopement—how many a stolen match—but whither am I wandering ?

" I hear that you are about to quit your room. I am rejoiced at your convalescence. How delightful—as the old gentleman in *The Stranger* more than insinuates—to feel well after being ill ! To breathe the fresh air—to move again among rural objects—to sit in the dusk of evening—such an evening as this day promises—in a jessamine bower—such a bower as that at the end of the second garden to the right of the acacia, as you enter by the little gate through the private arbutus grove—I say, how delightful in such an evening, and in such a place, to inhale the fragrance of the jessamine's creamy blossom—to sit and talk of our hopes in the next world, and our pleasures in this ! Oh, sir !

" Farewell, yours truly,

" Agnes Candy."

We do not intend to criticise this correspondence ; we merely vouch for the letters as true copies. That the widow should promise jessamine blossom in April, we put down to the unthinking liberality of the generous sex. For is it not in the power of woman to make even the dead twigs of life bud ?—to give to very stinging nettles the form and fragrance of delicious hyacinths ?

There are to our mind few letters so interesting from their origin, from the place, feelings, and sentiments which begot them, as these missives, written with only a thin partition between the writers. A matter-of-fact lover would have thought of a gimblet.

Job lay in a sweet pensiveness in bed, the last letter of the widow between his finger and thumb—when Faddle tapped at the door. " Better ?—oh, yes—much better "—cried that soul of hospitality, glowing benevolently at Job, who received the news with a smile of interesting languor. " And the widow—she vows she 'll leave her room to-day ! " Job felt the blood in his cheek, and crumpled the letter under the clothes. " He ! he ! Saffron 's given ye both up ! "

Job's lips moved, and we think he said—" Thank heaven ! "

" He swore there was no making ye better or worse. He ! he !

Medicine was thrown away upon ye. Oh! I had almost forgotten —your trunk is come."

"Trunk!" echoed Job, forgetting in the moment that he had spoken of a small, but handsome wardrobe, left at a distant inn, to be forwarded to him, whenever he should write for it—he pursuing a rambling tour throughout the country, led onward by its objects of the picturesque. And yet, had Faddle certified to Job that his "elephant, harnessed and mounted, was at the door," Job had not been more astounded than at the announcement of his trunk. Were the fairies back again?

"A young man left it. Nancy, let John bring it up. Ha! ha! widow," and Faddle tapped playfully at the wall, in answer to a light feminine laugh from the next apartment. The laugh was repeated. "Ha! ha! my lady," responded Faddle; and then looking archly at Job, sagaciously said—"You can't tell me who's in the next room?"

"My trunk!" cried the rapt Job.

"Ha! ha! my lady—oh, here is the box;" and the servant put down a square wooden repository, very like one of those precious coffers made for precious wigs.

"Trunk," repeated Job, eyeing the box as if it contained a lighted bomb-shell.

"Your name, however," said Faddle, reading in sonorous tones the direction on the lid—"*John Jewel, Esq.!*—Ha! you are right —very right," commended Faddle, contemplating the limited dimensions of the box—"never take a tour of pleasure with much luggage. A clean shirt, and a change—quite enough. I suppose, now, you have some of your sketches there?"

Job tried to speak, but could only effect a ghastly smile, which Faddle liberally translated into the affirmative.

"I must see them—where's the key?" and, at the same moment, impatiently placing his fingers to the lid, it yielded to the action. "Unlocked!" exclaimed Faddle, and the lid stood up. "Why, Mr. Jewel—humph—eh—ha, ha!—why, what is this? Sketches? Ha! ha!"

Job dissolved into a cold jelly, and the roots of his hair turned to ice, as Faddle, with a fine homage to art, carefully removed a pen-and-ink drawing from the inside of the lid, and held it in a light most favourable to its beauties. The connoisseur beheld, scratched with bold, though rugged touches on the back of a printed dying speech—(the valedictory oration of a celebrated sheep-stealer)—a gallows; the perpendicular and horizontal beams fancifully constructed of two baby corals, and the figure of a man, with that mortal inclination of the muffled head, depending therefrom.

"An odd subject—a very odd subject," exclaimed Faddle, "and what is this written underneath?—oh! I see," and Faddle, his eyes growing bigger, read with a tone of wonder, "*That's the Ticket!* Well, Mr. Jewel, I—ha! ha! I can't for the life of me compliment you on the taste of your design, but" and Faddle gave a look that heralded a joke, "but your execution is perfect."

Job grinned from ear to ear with ill-suppressed horror. He tried to speak, but not a word would come. He lay in silent agony—fairly nailed by terror to the bed—watching the looks and hands of the interested Faddle, who, his curiosity conquering his good manners rapidly twitched up the few articles of dress tumbled into the box. The freedom of Faddle, may, to be sure, admit of this excuse! had the garments been of velvet and brocade, he had not rudely laid his hand upon them; but openly displaying their coarse web and vulgar cut, they were at a thought plucked forth, and thrown about at pleasure.

"*Your* wardrobe, Mr. Jewel? *yours?*" cried Faddle, holding a doublet between his fingers, and his face wrinkling into a thousand lines of fear and doubt, as though he held a serpent by the tail,—"*yours?*"

Faddle waited for an answer, but Job was struck dumb by the mysterious apparition of his own breeches!

Yes; the box directed to "John Jewel, Esq.," contained the whole of the wardrobe, *minus* the shirt, of Job Pippins. Job raised himself upon his elbow, and with a peculiarly pale cast of thought surveyed the remains—the slough of his baser days. His higher nature (he was in the blue bed in a fine cambric shirt, lace ruffled) looked down upon his sordid first life. In that moment, the purified intelligence contemplated the squalor "shuffled off." No wonder then that Job, looking at his late nether cloth, after some time doubted his identity.

"This is some shameful trick," cried Faddle; "some infamous hoax." Job smiled in acquiescence. "A stupid piece of would-be wit." Job shrugged up his shoulders in pity of the inventors. "But it shall be seen into." Job shook his head and blandly smiled a—no. "But it shall! That a guest of mine should—no, Mr. Jewel, no,—it shall"—A sudden thought, with a rush of blood to his face, came upon Faddle; slapping his thigh with great force and precision, he exclaimed, "If now, it should be"——

A slight tap at the door, and enter the hero of the river—Frank Triton. "How-d'ye-do, Jewel, how-d'ye-do?" asked the visitor, with that graceful freedom which distinguishes the truly well-bred. Job smiled faintly, and immediately there grew at his bed-side a clump of alders, and a bright river ran through his chamber. "How-d'ye-do, sir?" and Frank offered his hand to

Faddle, who gathered himself up, and at a short notice, looked as dignified as a leaden statue.

"Mr. Triton, as a gentleman,—and a man of honour,"——

"Hallo!" cried Frank, evidently unused to such terms of conjuration on the part of the speaker—"Hallo! what the devil now?"

Faddle remained stern to his purpose. "Mr. Triton, as a gentleman, and a man of honour, do you know anything about this?" and inclining his fore-finger towards the box, Faddle looked the spirit of interrogation.

"About what?" cried Triton with a tongue of brass.

"About this, sir—and this—and this—and this?" and Faddle pointed to the various articles of dress, the *exuviæ*, of Pippins scattered on the floor: and as he compelled the eye of the questioned to jerkin, vest, and doublet, it was plain from the shifting expression of the beholder, that he was not wholly guiltless. Frank tried the first resource of detected crime; he essayed a laugh relentlessly nipped in the bud by Faddle. "No, sir, no, this is a serious matter; I look upon myself as insulted, and again I ask you if you know anything of these clothes?"

Triton hung down his head, and subduing a laugh, and then biting his lip, with a look of confusion, turned over the vestments with his cane.

"Enough, sir—quite enough: I see the joke—and a very poor one it is—belongs to you. How Mr. Jewel may receive it, I know not. Nay, sir, no denial. Now I recollect—there was nobody but yourself and your new friend Mr. Wigmore present," —(at the name of Wigmore it was observable that Frank switched his cane)—"when I spoke of Mr. Jewel's wardrobe; and I repeat, how he, as a man of delicate honour, may consider this affront, sir, I"——

Here the attention of the speaker was turned towards the bed where Job lay with a slate-coloured face, and his teeth rattling like dice. Whether it was fear, or conscience, that touched him, we will not enquire; Mr. Faddle liberally translated the emotion into indignant rage. "Of course, any gentleman so put upon, would be in a fury." And then the host, his softer nature returning to him, began to play the part of peace-maker. "It was wrong; it was very stupid of Frank—but he was a wit, and wits were very foolish people—and Frank, if he would but leave off his wit, would be a very fine fellow, and so Mr. Jewel would pardon the jest, and think no more of the rags sent in the box?" Job strove to make an answer, but still he lay dumb and bewildered.

"Come, come, forget and forgive. Now promise me, my

dear Jewel, you 'll think no more of the trumpery; will you, now?"

"I 'll—I 'll try to forget it;" magnanimously answered Job.

"That 's right; the brave are always generous; and the man who would jump into a river"——

Job looked piteously at Faddle—"Well, well, I 'll say no more of that; but you 'll shake Frank's hand—yes, you 'll shake his hand?" Job had some conscience, and still kept his hand in bed. "Come, I must have your hands upon it—I say I must;" and Faddle with a powerful philanthropy, pulled the hand of Job from beneath the sheets, and fixing it in the hand of Frank, bound the two in his own, and kept shaking them to make their friendship mingle.

"Now, now, I 'm happy;" and Faddle walked from the room, confident that he had planted the olive; and pondering on the courage and generosity of Job, who was at once a hero and a sage, and "couldn't help it."

Job, left alone with Frank Triton, was about to launch into general topics—when Frank put to him the following question—"Pray, sir, can you tell me anything of Mr. Wigmore?"

One moment before, Job was for turning upon his side, when the query, significantly put, kept him on his back. No beetle with a corking-pin through its bowels was ever more cruelly fixed. Job groaned.

CHAPTER XI.

"Pray, sir, can you tell me anything of Mr. Wigmore?" Frank, with cold ferocity, repeated the question.

Job felt the whites of his eyes turn yellow, as he replied—"No, sir."

"Very odd. I thought he recognised you at your meeting?"

"No, sir," repeated Job, with some improvement of tone.

"Why, I thought he alluded to an old complaint of yours. Didn 't he speak of a—a toothache?"

"Never saw him in my life till I saw him down stairs," said Job, with growing confidence; and what was more, with truth; for it will be remembered that when the great captain entered the hut, Job was sleeping in the arms of spirituous liquor.

"He has something the air of a—a gentleman," said Triton, doubtingly. Job was silent. "And yet, yet—" continued Triton, after a pause—"yet, it 's very odd."

"I thought he was an old friend," remarked Job; becoming interested by the manner of his visitor, and really anxious on his own account to know something of the mysterious Wigmore. "An old and valued friend?"

"Only an acquaintance of a few hours. I'll tell you, Mr. Jewel, how it was. You have heard of the affair of the swimming match?" Job tremblingly nodded an affirmative. "Returning to dress, I found some scoundrel had stolen my clothes. Without a rag—a stitch—you can easily suppose the perplexing delicacy of my situation." Job could. "At the very moment of my destitution, who should saunter to the bank but Mr. Wigmore. He professed the deepest sympathy for my loss; with the most benevolent zeal, ran to a neighbouring hut, and in a few minutes returned with the very garments you see before you, borrowed from the wife of a cottager."

"Indeed?" said Job, looking at his old familiar dress with the eyes of a stranger. "Indeed?"

"So he said; but the fact is, Jewel, one doesn't like to own one's self tricked; and, in the first place the hang-dog who stole my coat stole my purse with it. You are the first to whom I have owned so much, and"—here Frank confidently laid his hand upon the hand of Job—"and pray let it go no further."

"Nobody shall know it from me," stoutly promised Job.

"However, I don't so much care for the fellow who took my purse; he'll meet with his reward—yes, I already see the knot under *his* ear." Job instinctively clapped his hand to his jugular. "What's the matter, Jewel?"

"Weakness—only weakness," said the dizzy Pippins. "And—and—he—Wigmore borrowed those clothes from a cottager?"

"So he said; but, between ourselves, I hardly know if they didn't come from the bones of Jack-of-the-Gibbet. Look at 'em, Jewel;" and the speaker weighed the doublet at the end of his cane; "isn't there a Newgate cut about 'em?"

"Very Newgate," confessed Job. "But," said he, hastening from the subject, "what makes you suspect Mr. Wigmore?"

"I'll tell you. Struck by his friendly offices, and thinking him something of a character, I asked him to the house of a friend I am visiting, and then our talk falling upon"——

"Won't you try to come down?" said Faddle, knocking at the door, and speaking as he opened it. "Won't you come down, Jewel? The widow will be up, and there's somebody below, who—why, what's the matter? You are friends still, I hope?" anxiously asked Faddle, as he marked the look of constraint on the face of Triton, and the perplexed countenance of Job. "Still friends?" he repeated.

"To be sure—good-bye, Jewel, good-bye—mum !—not a word," added Frank in a low tone, but not low enough to escape the pricked ears of Faddle—"not a word ; we shall meet, and then" —and then in a louder note—"good-bye—wish you well—good-bye."

Faddle inwardly blessed his benignant stars that had brought him up stairs. "A feigned conciliation—a sham truce—'we shall meet'—yes, yes—very good : thank heaven ! there's a magistrate ! " All this passed through the beating brain of Faddle : however, disguising his sagacity, he again addressed himself to Job. "You 'll come down—you must come down—here, John, take this rubbish away "—and Job's late habiliments were again boxed, and carried from the presence. "You must come down—I have some friends here whom you must know. Her ladyship was just now in the next room—ha !—I declare—look upon the lawn—her husband 's come—there is Sir "——

Job looked from his bed, and though the out-door object had suddenly moved, Job too clearly recognised through the under branches of a laurustinus, the well-known ninepin calves of Sir Scipio Mannikin. Job sank back upon his pillow, and wished to render up the ghost.

"You *will* come down ?" repeated Faddle, his back turned upon the sufferer.

"In the evening—yes, in the evening." The doubting looks of Faddle compelled Job to peculiar emphasis ; and the host, affecting satisfaction, left the room. We say affecting, for Faddle was not to be duped.

And again Job was under the same roof with Sir Scipio and Lady Mannikin ; with the individual mischief—the sweet perdition of his hopes ! What was to be done ? As he asked himself for the twentieth time the perplexing question, his eye fell upon the *vera effigies*—in pen and ink—of William Ticket, scratched on the dying speech, fallen like a sybil's leaf upon the bed. As his eyeballs hung upon the black lines, his imaginative fears made them undulate and tremble, and he saw, not William Ticket, but Job Pippins in his mortal throes ! Nor were the terrors of Job without the best authority ; for at the very time that he lay in the Blue Room steeped in the cold dew of horror, his garments, accidentally waylaid in the hands of John by the inquisitive Sir Scipio, were recognised as the identical covering of the kiss-robbing—artery-cutting—repeater-stealing barber ! Great was the astonishment of Sir Scipio ; and many and curious were the looks passed between his stern self and gentle wife (Mercy married to Justice, but with no power over the sword,) as the story was told of the delivery of the box at the lodge—the theft committed

on Frank Triton—and the accident which put him under temporary obligation to Job's vestments.

"There is no doubt that the scoundrel," said Sir Scipio, and no man, from constant practice, gave more sonorous expression to the epithet—"that the scoundrel has joined the gang of ruffians prowling hereabout. Yes, yes"—and he looked at Lady Scipio as though about to promise her a delightful treat—"there 'll be a pretty cartfull. And this, madam—this is the fellow you have pitied!" Lady Mannikin spoke not; but, with eloquent emotion, passed her handkerchief across her eyes. There is a tongue in pocket-handkerchiefs.

Faustus in his agony shrieked—

"Lentè, lentè, currite noctes equi:"

Not so, Job; he lay and prayed for night. He had made up his mind—he had determined to escape. It is true, he thought of the widow with a touch of tenderness that—then again he thought of his neck, and the widow passed away. Marriage was a doubtful good—but hanging was a certain evil. To stay for the widow, was to go to the assizes; Hymen and Jack Ketch were in his case so intimately allied, that he must have them both.

The evening came on, the stars appeared, and Job, with a heavy, heavy heart, looked abroad into the grey sky, and asked himself where he should sleep. He rose from his bed—precipitately dressed himself—went to the door—touched the handle—withdrew his fingers—sat down, and again and again pondered the policy of his departure. Now, he thought of the good dinners, the soft bed, and the servants in livery. And now, all his hopes would be extinguished by a black cap! Yes; fly he must: so, resolving to creep down stairs, silently gain the garden, and thence gain the open road, he with a sinking of the heart, and pausing once to listen for the widow—(he listened and he heard her not)—he placed his hat upon his head, and was about to open the door, when—his arms dropt to his side, and he fell—*come cadde un corpo morto!*—he fell into a chair—the door was double-locked!

At the first burst of perspiration consequent on this discovery, Job could not have parted with less than two pounds of solid flesh. All was known—Sir Scipio had found him out—he was a lamb shut up for the knife! He listened, and he heard the clouted shoes of the parish constable ascending the stairs! No; it was his own heart thumping to get through his waistcoat. Job wiped his forehead, and tried to think. He had great presence of mind—but not in critical situations. He walked to the window; but gathered no counsel from the stars. He cautiously opened

the casement, to contemplate the possibility of "a drop." Bacchus —bountiful Bacchus—prevented his taking it. Never was the jolly god so beneficent to wretched man! A vine of at least some fifty years growth—a vine, with arms of cable strength—grew up the wall of the house, offering the firmest footing to the fugitive. Had the purple toper visited Ariadne as Romeo visited Juliet, he could not have set up a better ladder. Job's feet and hands were in a trice among the fruitful cordage—and so lightly did he descend, that never a bud was lost to the helper.

Job stole along the garden, and, silent as a mole, made in the direction of the high road. Creeping down one of the green alleys that intersected the grounds, he was suddenly struck motionless by a voice that touched his heart-strings. He laid himself flat upon his belly, perspired, and listened. An umbrageous lilac curtained him around.

"Two husbands before I 'm thirty?" exclaimed a female voice in a note of perfect satisfaction.—Now, the speaker was no other than Bodkin, the widow's maid. "Two husbands—a lord for a twelvemonth—and a third marriage at forty," was the reply: and Job gasped in agony as he recognised the deep, winning, subtle tone of Molly of the hut, removed to the precincts of Ladybird Lodge for the ostensible purpose of telling the future destinies of the anxious household. It seemed that for the last three days Molly had secretly driven her trade: every domestic, from the butler to the scullion, had crossed her hand and looked on future life.

"And now you must tell me about my mistress."

"The widow?" asked the black-eyed sybil.

"Will she—will she marry Mr. Jewel?"

"If nothing worse befal him," was the unsatisfactory answer.

"Worse!" cried Bodkin; "can any mischief threaten so sweet a gentleman?"

Job was generally above vulgar superstition; but in the present case he thought there might be something in a fortune-teller.

"At this moment," pronounced Molly, her voice deepening with her subject, "I see a gallows and a church—a noose and a wedding-ring—a coffin and a bride-bed."

"God bless us," cried Bodkin, "hang a gentleman!"—

"And why not?" asked the prophetess, quite unmoved by the probability of such a catastrophe.

"Hang Mr. Jewel!" still exclaimed Bodkin—"Why, what can he have done?"

There was a sudden rustling of the leaves—a quick footstep—and then another shrill, feminine, anxious voice, asked—"What can he have done?"

A delicious tremor went through the bones of Job as he heard the voice of the widow. It was, indeed, Mrs. Candy; won to the imprudence by the strong weakness of love, she had prompted her maid to touch upon the future fate of her mistress, herself hid the while among the bushes. Molly answered not; when the widow, with new fervour, laid a dollar in the gipsy's palm, and again repeated, with deeper tenderness, "What can he have done?" Molly was meditating, if possible, a satisfactory answer, when——when——

Job, worked upon by a thousand sweet emotions, and fearing to betray himself, lay and wriggled on the grass like a wire-snake in a pantomime. Holding his breath, and digging his face into the turf, two or three green blades unhappily entered his nostrils; and thus, when Molly was about to divine, Job published a loud sneeze. There was a death-like pause!

"A cat!" cried Molly.

"A man!" exclaimed the maid, with deeper knowledge: and instantaneously the three women, like a leash of startled hares, ran bounding off. Molly and Bodkin, not weakened by the weight of sorrow borne for the past six months by the widow, secured their retreat—but the widow, running with a more matron-like step, and accidentally coming in contact with Job, as he rose upon his knees, was locked—nay, double-locked in his nervous arms. Of course she was about to give a scream that would have split the "unwedgeable and gnarled oaks," but Job exclaimed, "'Tis I—your Jewel," and added to the evidence of voice the testimony of touch—and the scream of the widow, merely snapping a stay-lace, died mutely in her throat.

"You wicked man," said Mrs. Candy, "after such an illness to venture in the night air! Pray—pray return to the house."

"Impossible," cried Job, deeply impressed with the imprudence of such a step. "Impossible—my fate is fixed."

"What can you mean?" asked the widow with most peculiar astonishment.

"I say, my fate is fixed—but wherever I go, madam, the recollection of your charms, your virtues—the sweet hours of sickness passed in the Blue Room—Oh, ma'am! I am the unhappiest of men!"

"Don't say so," urged the widow, though at the time thinking the unhappiest of men the most picturesque object in creation. "Don't say so. What has happened?"

"Oh, ma'am! I am a wretch hunted by evil fortune—a miserable, ill-starred man—a victim to accidents that—why, why was I born?" exclaimed Job, throwing his head up to the stars for an answer.

"I see it all!" cried the widow—"I see it all—tell me, sir—pray tell me—I have heard the story from Mr. Faddle—but I thought you were secured—and now it all comes upon me—but weren't you locked up?"

"I—I was!"—and Job's teeth chattered at the recollection.

"And yet you have eluded him—and—oh, yes—the fortune-teller spoke too truly—yes, your life, your precious life is forfeit to the law! they'll—they'll"—and the widow grew hysterical with the conviction, and she laid her head upon Job's shoulder as she finished the sentence—"they'll hang you!"

Now, although Job had withstood the torment of his own fear of the gallows, he could not bear up against this touching corroboration; and the tears started to his eyes, and he stood dissolved, with one arm round the waist of the widow.

"And you have met—and you have shed his blood?"

"I did it for the best," said Job, his thoughts recurring to the apoplectic Sir Scipio in the waggon.

"No doubt—no doubt," replied Mrs. Candy with feminine charity—"but the world, Mr. Jewel—the world judges not of best intentions. And where—where is he now?" she asked with timid curiosity.

"In the Lodge."

"But are you certain of the worst?"

"Certain—I saw his legs among the branches, and"—a new gush of sorrow on the part of the widow awakened Job to new attentions.

"But this"—and Mrs. Candy wiped her eyes with marked decision—"this is no place for us—I mean for you. You must fly—you must quit the country—in a brief time the affair will be forgotten, and then you may return—and"——

"True, madam, true; 'twould be the safest—wisest plan—but, since you have shown such kind concern, I will confess to you that I cannot leave England without"——

"Nay, Mr. Jewel"—

"I cannot stir from this spot without"—money, Job was about to say, but the widow was impatient.

"You are a man of honour, Mr. Jewel?"

"I am, ma'am," and Job, anticipating an offered loan, put his hand upon his heart very boldly.

"Then—then be our two fates one—England, farewell—I 'm thine for ever," and she sank upon Job's neck, and his knees knocked together with his new responsibility.

At this moment, shouting voices were heard in the direction of the house. Sir Scipio and Faddle were loudly encouraging searchers and pursuers.

"No time is to be lost!" exclaimed the widow—"this way—this way!" And Mrs. Candy wound through the bushes, Job mutely and wonderingly following her, the shouts growing louder—and a brace of pistol bullets being fired, as Job swore, within a hand of his curls. For a few minutes let us leave the fugitives to their fortune.

Faddle, morbidly fearful of the irascibility of Job, had locked his door to prevent what he otherwise looked upon and published as certain,—a duel between Messrs. Jewel and Triton. He had unburthened his bosom to Sir Scipio, who, as a magistrate, proposed that the inhabitant of the Blue Room should be bound in heavy articles of the peace. For some time did they wait for the bell of Job; when Faddle, attended by Sir Scipio, proceeded to the Blue Room, where they found the window open and their Jewel gone. The affair was clear as day to Faddle: his guest, incited by his delicate sense of honour, had dropt from the window to keep a mortal assignation. On this, butler, footmen, grooms, lacqueys, all were armed, and all scattered about the grounds to seize the would-be homicides. They found not Frank Triton; for he had that day consented to be chairman at the Walton Club—a knot of brothers of the angle—and at the time of the search, was certainly about to measure his ground under the table. Neither did they find John Jewel, for he—however we shall return to him;—but they found, rolled up among the shrubs, armed to the teeth with crow-bar, centre-bit, and all the other implements of their profession, three gentlemen with one purpose—Phineas, Mortlake, and Bats, the triumvirate of the wattled hut. Two of them having fired in resistance, and thus satisfied their self-respect, modestly surrendered. Bats fought, but valour was in vain.

Let us return to the lovers.

They had crossed the bridge, when they espied a post-chaise rapidly approaching them, sent, as it appeared, for Doctor Lullaby, still a visitor at the Lodge, for a grand christening next day at Wiggledon Park. The widow possessed sufficient arguments to induce the postilion to take herself and her Jewel into the vehicle and turn the horses' heads. Away they rattled, Job sitting, in the estimation of his affianced wife, a new-blown hero by her side; she full of tenderness—he full of hope, when—the horses stood fixed. Job let down the glass to call to the postilion, when a horse's head looked into the chaise, and he heard, he thought, in well-remembered notes—"Stand—your money!" The widow screamed—"Wigmore!" and felt for her purse. The horse withdrew his head, and when Job, trembling on the verge of dissolution, rose to give the treasure to the highwayman, he saw

the animal with his forelegs stubbornly folded under him, and his rider tugging at the reins and digging with his spurs. Nor was the postilion blind to the accident, but lashing his horses, started on, and the wheel striking the head of the highwayman, knocked him senseless into the road. In four-and-twenty hours the inmates of the post-chaise were wedded man and wife.

Poor Wigmore—we mean the luckless Skinks—was found by a compassionate countryman, who recognised the horse as the property of Frank Triton, Esq.! It was a fine animal, but with one extraordinary defect, that of going upon its knees. The captain was delivered into the hands of the law. His further history is to be seen in that interesting miscellany which for the past few years has supplied the playhouses with their most touching dramas. It also contains brief notices of Phineas, Mortlake, and Bats. As for Molly, she became a most respectable woman. She married a sheriff's officer, and wore diamonds from the small and uncertain profits of a sponging-house. Poor Skinks! In an evil hour did he boast of his knowledge of horse-flesh; of his power to cure any steed of any known or unknown vice, and, in a no less luckless hour did Frank Triton, taking him at his word, lend him his bright bay without naming its particular defect.

And what became of Job Pippins?

He married the widow—made the grand tour—sent, anonymously, fifty pounds to Frank Triton for his purse and clothes—a handsome repeater to Sir Scipio Mannikin (he was dead, but the present was not lost upon his successor,)—returned to England—kept hospitable house—and having plenty of money, was a decent, respectable, neutral kind of fellow; a frank, jolly dog, whom the luck of accidents had made so, and "couldn't help it."

JACK RUNNYMEDE;

THE MAN OF "MANY THANKS."

CHAPTER I.

JOHN RUNNYMEDE was descended from a long line of placemen: with him, patriotism was an instinct. He was the last of his race, and though he had not inherited even one slice of the white loaf, one of the smallest of the gold fishes whereon many of his ancestors had feasted, his patriotism was in no way weakened by the want. Fortunately, John had no son: we say, fortunately, for the child of the unrewarded patriot might have lapsed into the rebel. Happily, there is no such blot upon the escutcheon of the Runnymedes: the death of John was worthy of all the lives of all his progenitors.

Whilst we refuse ourselves the pride of exhibiting the genealogical tree of our hero—a tree, determined by the heralds, to have first struck root in the court of the Conqueror—we will admit of no negative proofs of its antiquity and greatness. That a Runnymede has been known to sit in the stocks, shall be no evidence that a Runnymede has not sat upon the bench; that another has been whipped for picking pockets, shall not annihilate a Runnymede once high in the exchequer; that one of the family has rung the bell of a scavenger, shall not deafen us to the appeal of him who once carried a milk-white wand in the presence. It is with the tree of genealogy as with the oak of the forest; we may boast of the timbers it has given to a state vessel, but say nought of the three-legged stools, the broomsticks and tobacco-stoppers made from the ends and chips. Now, that John Runnymede was the son of a prosperous wheelwright, ought not, in the belief of the reader, to affect his descent from even the courtiers of the Norman.

"Yes—yes—have my vote? To be sure he shall: Mr. Side-

wind is a true patriot—a man who ought to die in Parliament—a man of principles—a practical man." Such was the loud avowal of Jack Runnymede, solicited for his vote by Mr. Side-wind's agent for the borough of ——, but no matter; we will not speak ill of the dead. Jack, be it understood, had inherited the great right of voting with a very small property; and as that right, at the time of our narrative, was exercised by a very few, it was the more precious to the possessor. "Ha!—the purity of election; the proud privilege wrested by the bold barons from a tyrant—yes, yes, thank God! I'm an Englishman." This was the constant thanksgiving of Jack, closing broken sentences on the value of Magna Charta—trial by jury—habeas corpus, and other political treasures enjoyed by Britons: and so strong was his gratitude for these inestimable benefits, that it sometimes escaped him under circumstances not particularly demanding its avowal. Thus, one day walking with his friend Fibb—an oily tradesman and a great patriot—he was stopped short by a crowd, gathered to behold the public whipping of a petty larceny offender. As the culprit came along, yelling under the lash, Runnymede profoundly observed—"This, politically speaking, is a cheerful sight."

"Cheerful!" exclaimed Fibb, suddenly thrusting his hands into his pockets, and pursing his mouth, like a squirrel cracking nuts—"Cheerful!"

"Politically speaking," answered Jack. "When we consider the cost of this ceremony—the erection of a prison to secure—the salary of a judge to condemn—the cost of a hangman to whip an offender who, it may be, has only stolen to the value of a groat—I say, it is a sight to make us venerate the laws—yes, to make us bless our stars that we are Englishmen."

"So you said to Sir Peter Polygon, when he stood upon the hustings, covered with mud," said Fibb.

"And I said truly," returned Jack. "Nay, suppose he had been killed by the mob—was there not freedom of election, and would he not have died an Englishman?"

Now the next day Jack was to quit town to exercise, as he justly said, the noblest right of an Englishman; namely, to choose a man to make new laws, and to mend old ones. This was the third time Jack had been called upon in the capacity of an elector, and never had his attendance been so necessary to the success of his cause; for a spirit of opposition menaced the return of the old member, accustomed to take his seat for the borough of —— as he would take his easy chair. If, before, Jack felt himself to be only one Englishman, his dignity on the approaching event was multiplied by at least three. Nay, had he been about

to return the whole Commons, he could not have entertained a stronger sense of his importance. "Happy land—glorious laws—heaven-born liberty—Magna Charta—habeas corpus—trial by jury"—all passed through his brain, and quickened his blood as he stept into the mail that was to convey him to the borough of ——. He was about to seat himself for his journey, when he heard 'himself, in no bland accents, called by name—"Mr. Runnymede."

"Who calls Mr. Runnymede?" asked Jack, thrusting himself half out of the vehicle, and dilating his nostrils as if to snuff the inquirer.

"I 've a little affair, Mr. Runnymede"—

"Not now," said Jack—"not now, my good man—when I return—little affairs, indeed!"

"Well then, it 's a big affair—and you must come out," and with this the speaker grasped the hand of Jack.

"I tell you, I 'm going to the borough of —— to give my vote"—cried Jack.

"*Give* your vote!"

"Yes, sir," and Runnymede was full of the patriot—"give my vote, or do what I like with it. I suppose I may do what I like with it. Thank God! I 'm an Englishman," and as Jack finished the sentence he almost fell in a heap upon the pavement; hauled out of the mail—for the coachman had taken the reins, and no time was to be lost—by the man who had so anxiously addressed him. "What is this—what is this? Thank heaven! there 's the law—and thank—"

"We must do our duty, Mr. Runnymede," said the fellow, interrupting Jack in his thanks.

"And I must do mine," said Runnymede—"and my first duty is to give my vote—yes, to get"——

"Two thousand pounds," cried the man.

"Not so much as that," said Jack, unconsciously.

"Every farthing—for that 's what the writ against you says,"—observed what proved to be a bailiff.

"A writ—and two thousand pounds—from whom? I don't owe two thousand pennies," exclaimed Runnymede, white with astonishment.

"All the better if you can prove it," said the catchpole. "The writ 's at the suit of Henry Parsons."

"Don't know such a man," shouted Jack—"and, two thous—— why, what for?"

"That would be very ill manners in me to ask," said Mr. Eyes, the bailiff. "Come, sir," he benevolently added, "don't get a crowd."

"But I tell you, I can't come—I"—at this moment the mail went off—"I shall lose my vote—I"——

"Shall I call a coach, Mr. Runnymede, or will you walk?" asked Eyes, without any comment.

"But you shall suffer for this," and Jack buttoned his coat very resolutely—"yes, yes—there are laws—thank heaven, there are laws! Parsons—two thousand pounds! I see it—you've taken me for another man."

Eyes smiled—bent his brows—and meekly observed—"Never did such a thing in all my life, sir."

"But you have—I know you have—never mind—it's no matter—I'm in your custody, it's true—I shall lose my vote—my candidate may lose his election—but I don't care—there's satisfaction to be had—yes, thank God! I'm an Englishman!" Nor had John Runnymede ceased his many thanksgivings, ere he arrived at the modest dwelling of Mr. Eyes.

The prisoner was courteously shown into the private room of his gaoler, where company was assembled helping the time with whist. "Is the pig done?" and Eyes spoke in a low voice to his wife.

"Trumps led—not quite," said Rebecca; then bowing a welcome to Runnymede, and attending to the play—"a small club."

"Pig for supper," thought Runnymede—"so, Eyes has really changed his religion with his name" (for the reader must learn that Eyes had long been known in the Hebrew world as Isaacs).

"The pig must be done," said Eyes to his wife, who nodded assent—"A little heart"—then to her husband—"I'm sure, if it isn't done, it won't be for want of brandy and tobacco."

"Brandy and tobacco!" thought Jack, and looked suddenly in the face of Eyes, who civilly observed—"It's too late to get bail to-night, Mr. Runnymede; but you'll be very comfortable here, I assure you."

"I never knew anybody half so lazy," said Rebecca aside to her mate—"if you don't—(another trump)—if you don't manage something—(another—my trick)—you'll lose the pig; his discharge came to-day—so you must—(trump again)—so you must"—

The attention of Eyes was called to Runnymede, who sat, violently knocking the floor with his toe, and contemplating with savage joy the prospect of legal satisfaction for the violence committed. Never had Jack felt so much an Englishman; never had the all-healing law appeared so gracious and so bountiful. The whole country—yes, the empire would thrill from one end

to the other at his wrongs. He jumped up, animated by the thought.

"You 'll stop with us to supper?" said Eyes, with unusual hospitality.

Runnymede was big with the thought of satisfaction; and replied with dignity—"I thank you—I 'm not partial to pig."

"Pig," said Eyes; and "pig," said his wife Rebecca.

Jack, however, had some compassion, and therefore gave the bailiff another chance of saving himself from certain destruction. —"Mr. Eyes, before I retire to my room, I do solemnly assure you as a gentleman and"—

("The Jack of Spades," said a lady at whist)—

"As a gentleman, and what is more, as an Englishman, that I know no Mr. Parsons—that I owe no two thousand pounds. If this be no mistake, there are some scoundrels in the business; whom to blame I know not—but it strikes me that the"—

("Honours are divided," said Rebecca, and she made the cards.)

"Shall I show you to your room?" asked Eyes, who had heard enough. "If there is anything wrong, it can't be helped to-night; and to-morrow there 's no business—but on Monday morning"—

"Monday! The election will be finished on Monday—I—but, no matter—thank heaven! there 's the law—yes, thank God! I 'm an Englishman," saying which, Runnymede followed Eyes up stairs. Just as the chamberlain had reached the first flight, he heard his name roared out, coupled with no complimentary epithets—

"What, Eyes! thief—catchpole—vermin of the earth—cannibal scoundrel!"—

"Mr. Noland—Mr. Noland," cried Eyes in an offended tone, and approached the abusive prisoner, who sat in a room, the door of which opened to the passage. Jack stood behind Eyes, and with some difficulty made out a man—who sat rocking in a chair —from clouds of tobacco smoke issuing from a short pipe, buried to the bowl in his mouth. A night-cap hung on the side of his head; and, his eyes filled with a sullen fire—his brow bent—his mealy face stained with red blots—his chin bristled with a fortnight's beard—and his sensual lips moving like worms with suppressed rage, he kept rocking his chair, and growled up into the face of Eyes—"You robber of the gallows! when am I to get out?"

"I hope, Mr. Noland, you have wanted nothing? Didn't Rebecca send you the brandy?" asked Eyes.

"Brandy! yes—yes," cried the prisoner, and taking an empty

bottle from the table, he flung it on the floor, and laughed in his throat,—"There 's the brandy!"

"Well, you shall have more, Mr. Noland—only, as a keepsake—do me this one little *pictur*"—said Eyes.

"I won't—not a touch—not a touch. I 'll work no more for gaol-birds. Damn me! I 'm a gentleman—do you mean to say I 'm not a gentleman?" and Noland rose staggeringly from his chair to assert his gentility. "What! because I don't put dolls upon canvas—and smear petticoats of velvet, I 'm not a gentleman," and he fell like clay into his seat: his head rolling from side to side, he growled—"Humph!—velvet—what 's velvet? Is any man's straw like mine! Any man's straw, I say? Sir——! oh yes, Sir——! *Sir!* paints lords, and so he 's a sir!—can he paint a pig? Can he paint a pig, I say? Makes judges' wigs, too—and fine ladies' curls and"—and he laughed with fixed teeth; "ha! ha! I should only like to catch him at bristles." Eyes approached the table, at which Noland sat, and bent his head towards a half-finished picture of a sow and her litter, devouring it with the looks of a connoisseur. As Eyes stooped, rapt by the art, a violent sense of his own merits came anew upon the artist, and staring for a minute to take good aim, he caught the unconscious bailiff by the neck, and grasping it like a Cyclops, beat his head upon the table, roaring above the voice of the injured officer, "I say, put 'em all together—can they paint a pig? Tell me that—can they paint a pig?"

This loud appeal, with the cries of her husband and the voice of Runnymede, brought Rebecca and her whist-party up stairs—"Goodness me! Eyes! Mr. Noland!—what 's the matter?" exclaimed the wife; when the artist quitted her husband's neck, rose, and in simpering drunkenness addressed the lady—"What! Mrs. Isaacs!"—

"Isaacs," cried the lady, disdainfully.

"Beg your pardon, but as I had the happiness of knowing you before you were a Christian, Mrs. Eyes—I"—and here, catching the officer by the shoulder, the artist roared a laugh, and again throwing himself in the chair, shouted—"Well, what do you think of the pigs? Was there ever prettier meat?"

"Beautiful—beautiful, Mr. Noland," said Eyes, rubbing his neck, and glancing at the unfinished picture—"like life, I declare—I 'm sure you can almost hear 'em grunt."

"Almost? Quite!" cried Noland, and his clenched fist fell like a hammer on the table.

"I never knew anybody work so quick as you," said the officer, with a horrid smile. "Why, you could finish it to-night?" Noland made no answer, but looked doggedly at the speaker, and

pointed his fore-finger towards the shivered bottle.—"Rebecca, love," said Eyes, "some brandy for Mr. Noland."

"And Mrs. Isaacs—Eyes, I mean—more tobacco," was the amended order of the artist. "Now, I say—you old thief, when am I to get out of your stye?"—and Noland spread himself in the chair awaiting an answer.

"Your discharge must come on Monday—but you'll dine with us to-morrow, Mr. Noland? Yes—for the last time," said the bailiff;—"but you'll finish the pictur?"

"Ha!—that is—I may come to dinner if I provide the pork. It's always been so, eh? Never mind—I'll mend all this—yes, yes—you rascally man-trap—this is the last time you catch me—this is—oh, the brandy!"

"Good night, Mr. Noland—good night," said Eyes.

"We shall expect you to-morrow at dinner," said Rebecca, prompted by her husband; and the visitors bade good night to the artist, leaving him silently glaring at the bottle.

"I only hope these painted things may be worth half what they cost us," said the bailiff's wife, before she slept.

"Hav'n't I got twenty out of him, and only for a little liquor and meat—and whenever one discharge has come, hav'n't I got something else put in against him, and all on purpose to keep him here and paint? Why, by-and-bye, when he's dead, them pictures will be a fortune to us. Do you think I'm a fool?" And the bailiff fell into a sweet slumber.

And where, it will be asked, was Jack Runnymede? In bed; in a room with bars at the windows, and the door locked, and chained, and bolted on the outside; a prisoner for the sum of two thousand pounds, he, as he truly averred, not owing two thousand pence. "It is no matter," said Jack as he turned restlessly from side to side—"I shall be amply repaid for this—yes, thank heaven! there is the law. I am deprived of my liberty by the perjury of some scoundrel—I am cheated of the exercise of a dear privilege, and at a moment shut up here in a cage like a wild beast—but what of it? There's a remedy—a certain, a glorious remedy—for, thank God! I'm an Englishman!"

CHAPTER II.

The next day passed as pleasantly with Jack as the company of his host and hostess would permit: as for the painter, his dinner with a new supply of brandy and tobacco was carried up stairs, Eyes remarking that it was a pity to disturb the artist at his work, if his heart was set upon finishing it. The Monday morning came, and ere Jack—active as he ever was, with the feelings of a Briton—could be up, Eyes, his keeper, was at his bed-side; and with a smiling face, observed "There was no occasion to send for bail—he could, upon consideration, take Mr. Runnymede's single signature to a bond—he was a man of honour"——

"And, thank heaven! an Englishman," added Runnymede; and no baron witnessed Magna Charta with greater dignity, than possessed Jack as he affixed his name to the bail-bond. This ceremony performed, a few minutes saw him in the office of his attorney.

"Bless me! Mr. Runnymede—I thought you were gone to,—— to vote for Sidewind?" cried the lawyer.

"Look at that," said Jack, and he threw down the copy of the writ politely afforded him by Eyes.

"What! Eh?—Parsons—two thousand pounds," said Mr. Candidus.

"Don't know the man—don't owe a penny," said Runnymede in a voice almost rising to a shriek—"there—arrested—as I was in the mail—carried off, I may say by force—locked up, and couldn't even send a note—but, thank heaven!"—

"Who's the attorney?—Oh! Ha! ha! Allwork, of Lyon's-Inn! Phoo—an election trick! You've lost your vote," observed Candidus.

"To be sure I have—but I possess the proud birthright of a Briton. Yes—thank heaven! I'm an Englishman—and satisfaction"—

"My dear Mr. Runnymede, what can we prove?"

"Prove! Hav'n't I been locked up—I—a freeborn Briton—hav'n't I been kidnapped—incarcerated for more than six-and-thirty hours?"

"But Allwork isn't worth powder and shot," said Candidus.

"No more are carrion crows," replied Jack, "but we shoot 'em for all that."

"Yes, but in this case the sport is very expensive. See here, Mr. Runnymede; if Allwork prove true to his employers, we can only go against him. Very well; if we should get a verdict—and it is by '*ifs*' that the profession lives—if we should get a verdict"——

"I shall punish the pettifogger," exclaimed Runnymede, swelling with expected triumph.

"And you'll pay your own costs," replied Candidus, very meekly—"and they'il not be a little."

"But I've lost my vote. Can't I prove damages?" asked Runnymede.

"That fact rests in your own bosom," remarked Candidus, and he rubbed one hand with the other, and his eye twinkled.

"It's no matter, Mr. Candidus—I'll not trouble you—good morning—you may be right—I dare say you are—but I can never be convinced—no, never while I breathe the air of Albion, that a man is to be locked up by another man, as you say, not worth powder and shot—and the culprit is only to be punished at the further cost of the injured party. No, sir--I have a respect for your character—for your great legal knowledge—but I can't believe this—no—I can't—for, thank heaven! I'm an Englishman."

Jack Runnymede quitted the office of his friendly adviser, determined to seek another more learned in the law than the simple Mr. Candidus. In an unlucky moment he ran against Earwig, a man of multifarious information; a man who, having no history of his own, made himself proficient in the history of every other person. He knew the boarding-school, its mistress, nay, the names of all its teachers, from which the Countess of—— eloped with a marching ensign, and the sign of the public-house at which the fugitives were overtaken. He could point out the apple-tree which the Lord Chancellor robbed, and knew the usher employed to flog him for the delinquency. No man was more keenly alive to the frailties of his fellow-creatures; no man had a stronger relish of defect in all things. To have discovered the spots in the sun, was to him greater than the discovery of the laws that govern the sun itself.

"Why, Jack?—Where now?—What's the matter? Something wrong? Yes—I'm sure, there's something wrong?" said the acute Earwig.

"Wrong! Do you know a fellow, named Allwork, of Lyon's-Inn?" asked Runnymede.

"To be sure I do; but his name's not Allwork," replied Earwig with decision.

"No?"

"No. His name's Chuff—John Chuff. He's Essex—from

Prittlewell: came to town—made a little money—I won't say how—but old things came up—so he leaves London; after a time, comes back—in mourning, deep as a raven; crape about his hat enough for a buccaneer's flag; the death's head was in the hat—ha! ha!—his aunt had died—and had left him her property, if he'd take her name. He took both. Hem!"

"But I hear," said Runnymede, "that he 's not worth powder and shot."

"Very wrong. He is worth powder—and shot—and rope," averred Earwig.

"And he changed his name? Why, what was it that came up? Tell me," cried Runnymede.

"Don't you know? Once stole two ducks ——

"Never?" exclaimed the incredulous Jack.

"And a hand-saw"—continued Earwig.

"It 's impossible," cried the charitable Runnymede.

"And a chisel," asseverated Earwig, becoming enthusiastic as he repeated the iniquities of Chuff.

"Are you sure of all this?" asked Jack.

"Know the farmer who lost the ducks—have seen the carpenter who owned the tools—once dined with the magistrate who committed the thief to prison—and have read the culprit's name in the gaol books. Depend upon it—'tis all true. Mind—'twas before he took to the law; and somehow—after a year's hard labour—he got into an office—and so on, and so on—and now, John Chuff is Arthur Allwork! All true? No, no, I'm too sorry for the actual faults of my fellow-men to circulate slander. We have all our failings, Mr. Runnymede; and a little charity costs nothing."

"Now—now I have him," thought Jack, and the whole day and part of the night did Runnymede employ, considering the best means whereby, despite the cold, prudential advice of Candidus, to obtain satisfaction of Allwork. The morning came; and Jack had not determined on his mode of revenge, albeit his purpose was become unalterable. The following paragraph in the papers did not, it may be conceived, tend to soften his stern resolve:—

"—— Election. On the close of the poll this day, the numbers for both candidates were equal; upon which the returning officer gave the casting vote for the new candidate. Mr. Sidewind is, consequently, no longer member for the borough of——."

Runnymede cast the journal from him with disgust. "And the money that must have been spent!—and that I should have lost the proud prerogative of an Englishman!—but—yes—yes—yes," and with a thought there lay before him pens, ink, and paper.

Oh, Jack! hadst thou no good genius, no friendly sylph to dry the ink up with its fanning wings—to waft the paper, like thistle-down above the chimney-tops—to seize the pen, and fly with it beyond the moon? Hadst thou no good spirit to serve thee? Wert thou left to stab thyself with a quill? Better had it been for Jack to have had plumes above his hearse, than a grey goose feather under his nose.

"There, Mr. Candidus—there, sir; I think you'll call that something. See; no sneaking anonymous—no, no; I never withhold my name from my sentiments, for thank heaven! I am"——

"What is all this, Mr. Runnymede," asked Candidus, as he put on his spectacles, and took up a newspaper, flung by Jack with a rejoicing air upon the office-table.

"Look, sir—look," and Jack emphatically tapped his fingers on a letter to the editor, Jack's work of yesterday—"there, sir; read—read."

Mr. Candidus cleared his throat and read—

"*TO THE EDITOR OF* ——

"*Sir,—It is the proud boast of every Briton that for every wrong he may find a remedy. The law, sir, with its ample shield, protects the poor from the tyranny of the rich, and in the scales of English justice a peer in all his robes weighs not the weight of a feather more than a naked ploughman.*"——

"Naked ploughman," repeated Jack, enamoured of the picture. Candidus continued—

"*No, Mr. Editor,—in this our happy, sea-girt isle, the marble palace of the duke,*"—Candidus paused.

"What now?" asked Jack.

"I never saw a 'marble palace' in England," said the unimaginative attorney.

"No matter for that," said Runnymede. "Go on." Candidus obeyed.

"*The marble palace of the duke can no more harbour oppression than can the straw-thatched cottage of the peasant. In Magna Charta, Mr. Editor, the name of every English subject is supposed to be written*"—(Candidus coughed, and then proceeded)—"*is supposed to be written, and liberty his god-like legacy. Yes, Mr. Editor, liberty is the vital blood of an Englishman; rob him of liberty, and you deprive him of life: it would be more easy for a Briton to exist without a heart than to respire without his liberty.* (Another cough.) "*Liberty, Mr. Editor, rocks the cradle of an Englishman—guides his infant steps—walks with him through life*

—and bends above his grave. Socrates had his good genius; an Englishman has his liberty."

"Very true—very excellent," said Mr. Candidus, through his cough, and about to take off his spectacles.

"Go on—go on," cried Jack with animation, "for now we come to it." Candidus adjusted his spectacles, and resumed.

"*If, then, Mr. Editor, liberty be all this—and who is base enough to deny a tittle of it?—what shall be said of the wretch, who for the basest purpose seeks to rob a Briton of his birth-right—to deprive him of the sacred legacy bequeathed him by his forefathers? And yet, such a miscreant is found to exist. To be sure, the man who is guilty of one species of theft must be capable of another; and he, whose oblique morality cannot, like Hamlet, distinguish* ducks *from* a handsaw, *or in other words*"—

"What *is* all this?" asked Candidus, looking as through a fog at Runnymede.

"Go on," said Jack, rubbing his hands, "go on—'*ducks*' from a '*handsaw*'—that's a slight touch I think?"—

"*Or, in other words, he who in his youth has not hesitated to steal poultry from a pond, he who has not stickled to rob the farmer and the artisan, can in later years hardly be supposed when tempted by lucre, to respect the liberty of his fellow. The matured abettor of perjury is the natural growth of the early thief!*"

"Mr. Runnymede!" cried Candidus.

"I think that 's a tolerable period," said Jack in a glow of vanity. "He 'll not sleep to-night. But go on."

"*In a word, Mr. Editor, and to prevent the slightest misapprehension as to the person pointed at in these hasty remarks,*"—

"Hasty!" repeated Candidus, with a sigh.

"*I beg most distinctly to state—for* magna est veritas—*that I allude to Mr. Arthur Allwork, of Lyon's-Inn, alias John Chuff, Prittlewell, Essex; whose infamy, if heaven spare me life, I trust to hold up to the disgust and execration of every true-born Briton. At present I must beg to be excused from entering into further details*"—

"Yes—that 's enough for the present," said Runnymede complacently.

"Quite," answered the attorney, and proceeded to finish the epistle—

"—*into further details,—and beg to subscribe myself your constant reader, and very humble servant,* JOHN RUNNYMEDE."

"That 's a letter!" said Jack.

"It is," said Mr. Candidus, looking compassionately at the writer—"and is it all your own work?"

"Every word of it," cried Jack, with all the susceptibility of an author—"every syllable, Mr. Candidus."

"And you have, doubtless, made your mind up to the consequences?" asked the lawyer. "You are prepared to stand an action for libel?"

"Libel! my dear sir, do you think me capable of falsehood?—why, it 's the truth, sir—every word, the truth; and as an Englishman,"—

"Well, well, Mr. Runnymede, if you will ruin yourself, you must, I suppose, be allowed to select your own means. If you will jump into a well after truth, you mus' n't complain if you are left to drown there a martyr." This said, the attorney addressed himself to some papers before him: Jack, however, could not silently assent to the position of the legalist.

"No, Mr. Candidus; no, sir; even were a man—an Englishman so to perish, the verdict of the world would be"—

"Suicide, under temporary derangement," continued the cool Mr. Candidus.

The generous spirit of Runnymede shrank from further contest with a mind incapable of elevated sentiment; and returning the fatal gazette to his pocket, he bade a frozen good day to the lawyer, who, with an eloquent shake of the head, acknowledged the civility, and again fell to his papers.

Runnymede walked with the stride of an injured man towards his lodgings. He had expected "loud applause and aves vehement" from his legal friend, who, in the opinion of the sufferer, had read a homily on the profitableness of falsehood. Jack had knocked at his own door, and had his foot upon the scraper, when he was addressed by a thin young man, with a yellow face, in very brown black.—"I believe, sir, your name is Runnymede?"

"It is," and Jack seemed to speak with new pride.

"John Runnymede?" asked the circumstantial stranger.

"John Runnymede," replied Jack very sonorously.

"Then, sir ——."

Mr. Candidus was a true prophet; Allwork had not lost an hour in the pursuit of a remedy for his bleeding reputation. The stranger at the lodging door of Jack had, in a manner not to be misunderstood, made known to him that Allwork would appeal to the laws of his country for vengeance on his slanderer.

"The sooner the better," exclaimed Jack with a radiant smile —"for thank heaven! I can then make known the truth—yes, thank heaven! I shall then feel what it is to be an Englishman."

CHAPTER III.

JACK RUNNYMEDE sat in the office of Gregory Crane, Furnival's-Inn, a skilful and, upon his own showing, a pious attorney-at-law, concerned for Jack in his coming trial with Allwork. The chivalrous defendant had disdained the mean advice of the conscientious Candidus who had counselled, if it were possible, an arrangement with the vilified party. Hence, in great disgust, Jack sought another Mentor.

"And when—when, Mr. Crane, shall we get into court?"—asked the impatient Runnymede.

Crane had opened his mouth to reply, when he was called into the outer office, to meet a client, swelling like a frog.

"Mr. Crane," said the stout stranger—"this is shameful, sir; there 's that Pierrepoint—just dashed by me on horseback—on an Arab mare, sir; an Arab mare. The saddle—the saddle—for what I know would pay my bill."

"Well, sir, and—heaven illumine me! what can I do?" asked Crane.

"Do, sir? why, serve the writ—do?"

"It 's mighty well," replied Crane with ineffable composure 'to say, serve the writ; but we can't do impossibilities. The bailiffs—heaven illumine them!"—

"Heaven!" echoed the scornful visitor.

"What I mean to say is this, sir; no lawyer can do more than issue a writ: the rest"—and Crane turned up his eyes towards a portrait of Coke—"the rest is in the hands of Providence."

The visitor wrathfully observed—"He ought to pay me, if he pays anybody."

"To be sure; but if he doesn't pay anybody—heaven turn his heart!—you can't complain of partiality." Thus spoke Crane.

"Some debts," said the dogged creditor, "are nothing more than book accompts. Some tradesmen if they 're never paid can't be wronged: they 're safe from loss: now it 's very difficult—it 's very difficult to cheat a tailor, or nine times out of ten, a wine-merchant."

"I can't say—I never tried," said Crane languidly. "But you don't call a wine-merchant safe?"

"Yes I do—that is, very often—if you return the bottles. In fact, bad debts are only bad in any trade but mine. A man can't pay his tailor, his bootmaker, his hatter, and there 's an end of

it—it's a simple contract, and he can't meet it. But, sir, in an accompt for walking-sticks, there's what I call a moral obligation."

"An article of luxury, to be sure," said the lawyer.

"Especially when a man rides on horseback," added the tradesman.

"Let me see. Heaven direct us!—I am afraid"—and Crane spoke with a sigh—"I am afraid, we can't make him a bankrupt."

"He doesn't owe me quite enough," suggested the creditor.

"That's a pity," rejoined the attorney. "And then he's a gentleman—ha! the Lord have mercy upon us!—those gentlemen give us a great deal of trouble."

"He'd a walking-stick a week for two months," roared the creditor. "I shouldn't have cared for the mounted dragon's-blood—nor the pheasant—nor the partridge-eye—nor the iron—nor the ivory—nor the green-ebony,—but—but," and the poor man seemed softening into tears—"but the unicorn I can't swallow."

Indeed, it was too much to expect of any man. We know that Vincent de Beauvais assures us that in his time unicorns were commonly to be caught by chaste virgins, devoted to the sport. Now, whether in latter days fewer ladies assert the needful licence, or whether unicorns themselves are become scarce, we shall not linger here to inquire. Certain it is—a unicorn is not every day devoted to the bucks of London. And thus, when our tradesman had possessed himself of that, which the temporising scepticism of modern times consents to call a unicorn's horn—and thus when exquisitely mounted, it was yearned for by fifty opening purses,—it was unkind, it was unprincipled of Henry Pierrepoint not to assuage his thirst for walking-sticks with dragon's-blood—not to soothe himself with partridge-eye;—but, careless of consequences, reckless of a previous bill—thoughtless of the low profits of the honest tradesman, struggling with a wife and five children—(though six is the catholic number)—we say, it argued in the debtor a foolish brain, and we fear a perverted heart, under such multiplied circumstances of aggravation, to rob a man of his unicorn. We are inclined to think that Mr. Crane was of our opinion; for touched by the sufferings of his client, he called in the senior clerk.

"Mr. Terms, really, with the blessing of heaven, this Mr. Pierrepont must be arrested."

"Yes, sir. We'll do our best, sir; but there's no catching him,"—said Terms.

"Pish!" cried the owner of the unicorn; and the chief clerk looked with sudden dignity from the goose-quill he was cutting into a pen with the same coolness that a bravo sharpens his

knife.—"I say, pooh!" cried the undaunted dealer in dragon's-blood—"I saw Pierrepont myself to-day—he was on an Arabian mare, I don't mind expense—for my spirit 's up—and I will have him."

"Come, Mr. Terms—how—how, under Providence, may he be served with a writ?" asked Mr. Crane.

"You don't mind expense, sir?" said Terms, very mildly.

"No—I don't!"—and the man of sticks wiped his brow, and struck his fist on the desk.

"Well, the surest way I know to serve him with a writ is this,"—

"Name it, sir—name it."

"You say he rides an Arab mare?"

"I saw him—this very day, I saw him."—

"Then the likeliest plan to serve the writ is,"—

"Yes?"

"To mount a bailiff on a Persian horse?" and Terms nibbed his goose-quill.

At length the tradesman fell in with a less expensive mode of service, subsequently suggested by Terms, and quitted the office, comforted by Mr. Crane, who—under Providence—assured him that Mr. Pierrepont would soon be in a gaol.

Turn we now to Jack, lapsed into profoundest slumber. We can take it upon ourselves to answer, that saving the employer or his clerks, no man, since the invention of vellum, ever slept so soundly in the office of a lawyer as, at the hour we speak of, did Jack Runnymede: there was no such snoring in the recollection of the oldest solicitor.

"Mr. Runnymede!" cried Crane; and at this moment, the inn clock struck five—"Oh!—Baldwin, where 's my watch?" and the attorney spoke to a boy at the desk.

"Not done yet, sir," and the boy puckered his lips.

"Not done!—and—what are you laughing at? Not done?—why, I sent you for it this morning, and what did the fellow say?"

"He told me to tell you, sir, that you couldn't have it."

"The scoundrel—Heaven forgive me!—who did you see?"

"I saw his journeyman, sir; and when I said I came for Mr. Crane's watch, after some talk he said he 'd bring"—Baldwin was interrupted by a loud knock at the door, which, opened, discovered the journeyman true to his word.

"Oh, my watch?" said Crane, prophetically, and he again went into the outer office.

"Your watch, sir," replied the man with a slight difficulty of speech, contracted that afternoon at the Blue Posts.

"There wasn't much the matter with it—'tis an excellent watch?"

"Quite a trifle, sir—and as you say, a capital thing," and the man produced the chronometer.

"I have had it these twenty years, and 'twas always true as the sun—it never stopt before. What could ail it?"

"Look, sir;" said the man, exposing the works of the watch, and putting a glass in the fingers of Crane—"look, sir; somehow or the other, there 's a long, thin hair got in the balance-wheel."

"I see it—I thought some such trifle," said the lawyer.

"I have but to use these pliers—draw it out—and your watch goes on as well as ever."

"Heaven be praised!—well, make haste—for I have an appointment, and shall be past my time," urged Crane.

"Well, I sha'n't do it," cried the man, and grasping the watch in one hand, he laid his folded arms upon the table, and his face darkened as, in defiance, he turned it towards the lawyer.

"You won't pull out the hair?—heaven illumine!—then, give it me," commanded the attorney.

"What! you 've forgotten me, Mr. Crane?"

"Eh! Joshua Daly? Bless me!—I made—that is, you were a bankrupt fourteen years ago."

"I was. For twenty years I 'd never missed a bill—never let a man ask twice; an accident—a trifle—a hair in the balance-wheel—stopped me at a second. If you recollect, I showed you what it was—showed how a little time would serve to pluck out the hair, as I may say, and set me going again. You wouldn't hear me, Mr. Crane—you know, you wouldn't;—and now"—and Daly threw up the window.

"What are you going to do, man?" cried the attorney.

"I 'm going to teach you this lesson: in future, not to break a poor fellow to pieces for one little hair in the balance-wheel. In your own words, Mr. Crane, I 'm going to make a bankrupt of your repeater."

And as the words were uttered, the golden watch of Gregory Crane was shattered to pieces on the stones beneath. The owner stood speechless and aghast. The spoiler took the door in one hand, and holding up his fore-finger, exclaimed to the dumb-stricken lawyer—"you 'll recollect the hair in the balance?" So saying, he vanished: next morning the shop was to be let, nor master nor man was there.

Now, the ruling passion of Mr. Crane was to make bankrupts; and few there were, however flourishing in appearance, proof against this inclination. We are disposed to think he would have found a deficit in the accompts of Plutus. And then he

laboured with such apparent pleasure in the vocation, that we are convinced he thought he was working for the ultimate good of the gazetted. "Better make him a bankrupt," was Crane's constant advice to a consulting client. He seemed to look upon a tradesman as Columbus looked upon an egg; to make the dealer stand the firmer, it was with Crane indispensable that he should first be broken.

CHAPTER IV.

Men, falling asleep in a conservatory, have been known to die an aromatic death—to sleep sweetly for ever. Now Jack Runnymode slept in the office of Gregory Crane; and the *genius loci* had spell-bound the brain of the sleeper. He had seen visions of drollery and terror—a strange, phantasmagoric jumble of the ludicrous and shocking. Jack dreamt that he was in the Arcady of the infernal regions—and there, lying on a brimstone bank, his tail coiled like a sleeping adder, was Beelzebub himself, piping as "he should never grow old." The devil puzzled Jack; for looking steadfastly at him, the dreamer saw in the infernal musician, now the likeness of one man and now of another. His face was perpetually changing to a resemblance of fifty people—and some of them most respectable inhabitants of earth—known to Runnymede. And now, would the devil look like Jack's first love, and now would he wrinkle the brown lips of his present landlady. And the music the devil played was, to the ears of Jack, not unlike a great deal of the music of this world. And what think you, was the devil's occupation? That of a shepherd: yea, as he piped, he kept his eye upon a flock of sheep. In five minutes, Jack was as familiar with the devil as though he had known him all his life. But it may be thus with those determined upon his acquaintance. We give the following conversation reported by the waking Jack.

"A good day to you, shepherd."

"A fair, bright day to you, my gentle swain," blandly answered the infernal pastor.

"Lord have mercy upon us!"—(the devil frowned)—"what dog is that?" And Jack stared at the devil's sheep-dog.

"Good Lex—good Lex," said the devil, patting the dog's head with the hand of affection.

"The devil has a loveable nature to like you," thought Jack,

staring at the dog. "Of what breed may he be?" ventured Jack to ask aloud.

"Lex is a bitch," said the devil gravely. "Do you want a little pup?" The appearance of the animal promised fecundity.

Jack paused; and then again he asked—"What breed?"

"None in particular, but sometimes all," replied the enigmatical devil. "Sometimes the pups of Lex begin as lap-dogs, pretty little spaniels—then they turn to mastiffs—then to lurchers—and then, and that's most common, they often end as bloodhounds. Will you have a little pup?" again asked the devil.

"I'll never keep a dog," said Jack, timidly rejecting the favour.

"Lex will eat anything. Before now, her pups have devoured a whole mansion, and after that picked white the bones of the master. Will you have a little pup?"

Jack shook his head, and resolutely answered, "no." The ingenuous praise of the shepherd was sufficient for Jack; and the bitch herself had a sinister look, quite worthy of her master's eulogium. Her hair was strong and coloured like rusty wire—her ears hung flapping down like a chancellor's wig—and her eye had something in it terribly human. "No Lex for me," repeated Jack. The devil again took up his pipe, and played what Jack in his ignorance thought a jig.

"A very fine flock," said Jack, casting his eyes upon the sheep. "How goes mutton, now?"

"Heavy," replied the devil, and again he piped.

"Pretty creatures! What a fine thing is a sheep to us!—his meat fills our bellies—his wool clothes our backs—his entrails delight our ears. Every thing about him is made a blessing to man."

"Especially the parchment," said the devil; and he cocked his eye, pulled Lex by the ear, and once more played his pipe.

"They'll make fine meat," observed Jack, viewing the broad backs of the flock. "Fine meat!"

"Meat!" cried the devil, and he laid down his pipe, and rose to what seemed his full height, and with a fine satanic frown, reiterated—"Meat! do you take me, fellow, for a butcher?"

"No," stammered Jack, and he felt as he could hide himself under a mushroom—"No, you are"—

"Shepherd," and the devil shot up six feet higher as he spoke—"shepherd to the honourable society of attornies. We kill for skins to-morrow. Graziers breed meat—but how much of law parchment is from the devil's own flock?"

And so saying, the devil vanished with a rattling sound, and Jack looked about in his dream, and found himself in the office

of Mr. Crane, with all the lids of the japanned deed-cases flung open, and from fifty boxes, at least a hundred figures, puppet size, the incarnation of the goodness, guilt, and folly of the writings therein, arose. From one marriage-settlement rushed forth a brutal pigmy, dragging by her long flaxen locks, his one year wife: from another, gaily tripped a self-contented gentleman, light and airy beneath a hundred weight of antlers. Now, a grey-coated, white-haired, yellow-faced little hunks, would emerge from a will, followed by a crowd of poor relations; flinging a shilling at them, the old gentleman gives his wealth to trustees for a chapel. And now, from title-deeds would rise a stately mansion, in an old, old park, and now, it would change into a house-of-cards; and now the trunks of forest oaks would dwindle into dice-boxes. From the will of a fond old miser who had left all to his nephew, Jack saw a grey-haired wretchedness, hoarding farthings in a rotten sack,—from the last testament of a doting husband tying up his wife from a second marriage, was seen the disconsolate widow seated on the knee of a fox-hunter. Talk of churchyards and catacombs and blasted heaths, thought Jack in his sleep, there is no such place for spectres as the office of Gregory Crane, attorney.

At this thought of the sleeper, the lid of the private strong-box of Crane rose up, and out came a thing about a span high, the diminutive likeness of the lawyer himself. In his hand he held a gazette wet from the press: as he looked upon it, some half-dozen bankrupts, with their wives and little children, formed in ring about him. The attorney-ghost then laid the paper by, rubbed his hands, placed them behind him, and as he looked at the faces surrounding him, his own face glowed like a Dutchman's above a bed of tulips. Jack watched the attorney with breathless interest; indeed, the conduct of the spectre commanded solemn attention; for, having carefully surveyed the crowd about him, the ghost grinned like an ogre—turned up his large coat sleeves, and seized a bankrupt, the heaviest of the lot. To the terror of Jack, Crane shook the man in his teeth as a cat shakes a mouse. Jack could endure it no longer; he jumped from his seat, exclaiming—

"Crane! you old scoundrel!"

"What!" cried the indignant attorney; and then in a milder tone—"Heaven illumine me! scoundrel! Mr. Runnymede!"

"Eh!" and Jack sank in the chair, and rubbed his thumbs in his eyes, and gaped at the lawyer in the flesh, who opportunely arrived to hear the opinion of the dreamer. "Is it you, Mr. Crane? Well, I declare—I ask pardon—but I was having such a scandalous dream about you."

"You shouldn't even dream scandal—I won't swear that it isn't actionable," sternly replied the lawyer. "But Mr. Runnymede—to business"—

"To business," echoed Jack, with a look of alacrity.

"This may be a difficult case, Mr. Runnymede—but you shall have justice—more, sir, you shall have law!" Jack started. "What 's the matter, sir?"

"Nothing," replied Jack—but he spoke not ingenuously; something was the matter. The reader already has not forgotten the vision of the satanic shepherd: and the truth is, when Crane with one of his hardest smiles—and there are smiles that make some faces look more stony—said, "you shall have law," the speaker seemed to Jack to wear the very shape and countenance—to speak in the very tones of the infernal pastor, when he smiled and asked—"will you have a little pup?" Jack started at the extraordinary similitude. "All we want," said Runnymede with an effort, "is justice; and with truth on our side,—can we, as Englishmen,—with the blessings of Magna Charta—the invaluable right of trial by jury?"—

"Very right, indeed, Mr. Runnymede—very right; no, I think we are pretty safe. You spoke of witnesses?"

"The men, Mr. Crane—the very men: I have no doubt that with some little cost and trouble—and to keep sacred the rights of a Briton, what is money, what is toil?—I can produce the very men; the owner of the duck—the carpenter, the owner of the handsaw," and Jack already looked big with anticipated triumph.

"Ha! yes—very likely;" said Mr. Crane, "but unfortunately, by the course adopted by the plaintiff, we shall not be allowed to produce witnesses." It was in vain that the solicitor sought to impress this fact on Runnymede; our unsophisticated hero quitted the office of his adviser, strong in the ignorance of his prejudice, and fully determined on the pursuit of truth.

CHAPTER V.

It was nearly noon when Jack Runnymede stood before the house of the proprietor of a London theatre; of the gentleman discovered to be the last employer of the carpenter. Jack ascended the steps, and knocked at the door. Ere the knock was answered, Jack had time to consider the brief dialogue of two persons on the pavement, a few yards from him.

"Well, Snowden, are you engaged for next season?" was a question put to a rotund person, with a very satisfied set of features.

"No—no; nor I don't mean to apply. I—the fact is—I shall not demean myself by making the first overtures," said Snowden.

"You won't apply?" said the somewhat astonished querist.

"Certainly not—most assuredly not. At least, this—this is all I will do—nothing more—nothing more. If I go up three steps to Mr. Trapp's door"—Trapp was the name of the proprietor—"Trapp himself must, and shall, come down the other three to me."

Jack counted the steps—whereof he stood upon the topmost—and found them six. The door opened, Jack was shown into a room, and his name promised to be taken to Mr. Trapp, who that morning met a more than usually crowded levee. Either Jack's ears were extraordinary long and sensitive—either the wainscot was of the thinnest—or the speakers more than commonly high and animated in their tones, for Runnymede, at first very unwillingly, overheard the whole of the conversation.

"What, Madam! Wear a cross as *Mandane!* A Persian princess! Never yet has the public beheld such a contradiction—a contradiction, ma'am."

"That may be, sir,—very likely; but public taste is much altered;" said the *prima donna.* "Either I am permitted to wear my diamond cross and rosary in Mandane, or I quit the theatre."

"You may introduce the ballad,—yes, you may sing *Wapping Old Stairs* in 'Artaxerxes,' if you please; but I do assure you"——

"Very well—very well, the ballad is one point; but you must allow the cross. I should like to know, what is the use of having diamonds, if one isn't to wear them?" asked the lady.

"But don't you perceive, madam, that to wear a rosary in the time of Artaxerxes,"—the critics had recently questioned the propriety of the act—"don't you perceive?"—

"It 's no use talking, Mr. Trapp; for the last time I tell you, either I wear my diamond rosary and cross in whatever part I please, or I quit the theatre. Another time, I 'll secure the privilege by having it put in my articles." And so determining, the lady left the vanquished proprietor.

"Well, sir," said Trapp, in a very altered tone; and Runnymede at first thought the gentleman spoke to some intrusive cur; "well, sir, you must write us another comedy."

"Really, Mr. Trapp, with my other duties, it is impossible that

I can compose so elaborate a work as a comedy," said the author; for it was a dramatist, and not a dog.

"Impossible, sir! And why—why not?" asked the proprietor.

"You must allow, sir, that my labours as a manager require that I should be here nearly every morning from ten at noon to twelve at night?"

"Very true, sir—I know it," said the acquiescing Trapp.

"And that, sir, every day of the week—you grant that?"

"Certainly—of course;" accorded the proprietor.

"Then, sir, how is it possible," asked the author, "with my time so engaged—I ask you, how is it possible that I can write a comedy?"

"How is it possible," retorted Trapp in a tone of amazement, "why, sir, hav'n't you your Sundays?"

It was evident that the dramatist had not another word to say in defence of his idleness; for without venturing a further reply, he quitted the apartment for the next person in waiting, who proved to be the tailor of the establishment.

"Well, Spangle, and what do you want?" was the question.

"I 'm come, sir, if you please, about the new gaberdine," replied the tailor.

"About what?"

"The new dress for Mr. Trout's *Shylock*."

"Oh! well, let me see—why, *Shylock* was always played in"——

"Yes, sir, I know—and we have the stock dress in the wardrobe, sir; but Mr. Trout won't have it on any account. He says, the character of Shylock has been quite misunderstood because played in black; he says that, in fact, Shylock was a very decent sort of person until he grew wicked; that, indeed, he means well, but people won't let him do what 's right; and all this he intends to convey to the audience by means of the colour of his gaberdine,—and therefore, he says that he won't play Shylock in black, but he must have a dress of a—a benevolent colour."

"A benevolent colour," said Trapp; "well, I suppose, Spangle, you must get it—a benevolent colour—yes, you may get it."

Mr. Trout in his choice of a benevolent hue, possibly received his theory of colours from Sir Anthony Shirley, who, in his travels in Persia, says, "The king's disposition is noted by his apparel which he wears that day: for that day which he weareth black, he is commonly melancholy and civil; if he wear white, or green, or yellow, or any other light colour, he is commonly merry; but when he weareth red, then all the court is afraid of him, for he will be sure to kill somebody that day; I have oft-

times noted it." Would we could make known to the reader the hue of benevolence; whether of one colour, or colours intermingled! As, however, Mr. Trout noticed extraordinary contradictions in the character of Shylock, perhaps—we might in vain search a file of papers for the discovery—perhaps, he played Shylock in a harlequin's jacket.

Jack sat with extraordinary patience, expecting every minute to be called in, but every minute disappointed. "Oh, John!" and Mr. Trapp spoke to his footman, "has the messenger returned from Mr. Pastely?"

"Yes, sir—half-an-hour ago, sir."

"And has he written the last act of the play, yet?" enquired the manager.

"Not yet, sir; but the messenger said he was hard at work."

"What! he saw him then?" said Trapp.

"No, sir, he didn't see Mr. Pastely himself," replied the footman.

"Then how could he tell that he was employed on the play?"

"Why, sir, he said he knew he was, for he saw the scissor-grinder at his door;" and with this proof of Pastely's industry, Trapp was silent.

And then there sounded a confident footstep, and a voice spoke to the manager. "Well, Trapp, here we are—another poor season. If you'd taken my advice, how business would have flourished!"

"Now, what—what would you have had me do?" asked Trapp, pettishly.

"Do! why strengthen the company. What do you think I'd do, if I had this theatre? I'd have working people—twelve men, eight women, all good;" said the speaker, in a voice like that of a cock with a cold; but, nevertheless, speaking very oracularly. "Now, mind what I'd do. I'd bind people to me by friendship—yes—I may say by friendship. I'd go to Bootle, and I'd say to Bootle, 'Bootle, what will they give you at Drury Lane?' 'So much.' 'Very well, Bootle, I'll give you more!' Then I'd go to Simcox, and I would say, 'Simcox, what will they give you at Drury Lane?' 'So much.' 'Very well, Simcox, I'll give you more!'" And thus the speaker ran through the twelve men and eight women, "all good," putting to each man and each woman the like query of, "What will they give you?" and replying thereto, "Very well, I'll give you more." When he had despatched the whole twenty, for he did not spare poor Trapp a single case, he summed up thus; "Yes, ladies and gentlemen, I'll give you more—more—more than you can get anywhere else, and so I have every faith in

your devotion to your art, but on these terms you will come to me *con amore!*"

"Well, perhaps they might," answered Trapp, musingly.

"And now about the new farce?" asked the actor.

"No, the farce next week," said Trapp.

"Of course it has been altered according to my directions? I must have all the jokes of Prigly; the two bailiffs must be cut out, as they weaken my scene; the old woman must be reduced to lines, saving the best for me; the escape through the practicable fire-screen belongs, in fact, to my part, and all the spice of the Jew Barabbas can only come from my mouth."

"I have given Pastely the necessary directions, and, of course, he will abide by them," said Trapp.

And then a sudden rush of ladies and gentlemen, convoked to a "reading" in the parlour of the manager, kept Jack fixed to his seat. At intervals, three or four carriages drove up to the doors, conveying the principal artists to assist at the ceremony. The piece about to be read was "The Beggar's Opera."

Immortal John Gay! He did not snip life as young ladies were wont to snip watch-papers, after what pattern they would; he simpered away nothing of its reality into conventual no-meaning. He made not mere filagree of literature; and choosing a prison-yard for his arena, he never thought to plant thyme there for bees, or pansies "freaked with jet" for the button-holes of the holiday-making felons. Look at *Peachem* and *Lockit;* a brace of social ogres. *Peachem,* with a lacker of good-breeding upon him; *Lockit,* begrimed with the dirt and damps of a prison. All *Peachem's* views of life have been taken from high ground, and high examples. We could swear he had been, in early life, valet to a statesman. *Lockit,* on the other hand, is a fellow risen from under-turnkey. When *Mrs. Peachem,* unconsciously "meddling in matters of death," insinuates compassion for the doomed *Bob Booty,* her husband, resolved upon a "decent execution," observing, with an elegant sophism far beyond his sphere—"No gentleman is ever looked upon the worse for killing a man in his own defence; and, if business cannot be carried on without it, what would you do?" Again, his maxims on play; "The man that purposes to get money by play, should have the education of a fine gentleman, and be trained up to it from his youth." Next, of what he considers the value and purpose of his child; "My daughter to me, should be like a court-lady to a minister of state, a key to the whole gang." You hear nothing of this from *Lockit;* he could as soon speak Arabic. He is cold, venal, brutal, from the coarsest sense of self-interest;

Peachem, has the taint of high society. He has been behind the curtain, and seen the wires. All he does, as keeper of a gaol for felons, as the go-between, the patron and betrayer of thieves, is but a repetition of what he has seen elsewhere—the translation of the fine words of high life into the slang of Newgate. The cold, murderous look with which he meets *Macheath*, his son-in-law, after his betrayal by *Jenny Diver*, is but the "pale reflex" of the light of cabinets of his time. And *Peachem's* wife, how worthy of him! Quite "bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh." It is clear she has, in former days, been the trull of two or three lords, and at length taken for a good round sum by her present partner. Her half-advocacy of *Polly;* her plea for the tyranny of love, with the loose-hung tongue and rolling eyes of a Covent-Garden Venus, and that most candid avowal, "Well, Polly, as far as one woman can forgive another, I forgive thee," assure us of her interchange of sentiment with *Peachem;* and that "not being married," the two have long lived "comfortably together." And then, *Polly!* What a beautiful vindication is she of the purity of woman's nature—of the simplicity of truth—of its triumph over circumstance. *Polly* is a flower blooming in the chinks of Newgate stones. "The Beggar's Opera" is a terse, vivid essay on men and manners. All its characters are real flesh and blood, and the sentiments they utter, good or bad, the coin which passes current in the world. It is a book for all men of all grades; from the courtier in his levee-coat, to the felon in his chains.

The ladies and gentlemen had assembled to read "The Beggar's Opera" for impurities: they were convoked to present to the moral world, a family edition of John Gay. The proprietor, wisely mistrusting his own unassisted powers of mutilation, had called about him the several severe and acute minds to be found in his company; and doubted not that, under the chastening fire of such an assembly, naughty John Gay would come out bright and pure as newly-minted gold. The reading was about to commence, when a lady—she was to represent *Captain Macheath* in a blue frock coat, white trousers, round hat, and straw-coloured kid gloves—requested that the ceremony might be deferred until the arrival of her mamma, who had promised to attend to point out to her the improper passages. At the instant, carriage wheels were heard—the knocker sounded—there was a rustling of silk in the passage—a sudden smell of musk—and, enter the mamma of Captain Macheath.

The reading began, and—as the parties read from an already purified text—no objections were made to the author, until *Mrs. Peachem* came to—

"What business hath he to keep company with lords and gentlemen? he should leave them to prey upon one another."

On this, Mr. Trapp with a knowing elevation of shoulder and earnest screw of the head, ordered the passage to be expunged, as it would be offensive to his boxes. Whereupon the prompter drew his quill across the passage.

Next, *Mrs. Peachem*—who had played the singing old women for thirty years, and wore at her neck the portrait of a gentleman, her first deceiving love, in the costume of George the Second—suggested purification. Could she say such things as these?—

"She loves to imitate fine ladies, and she may only allow the captain liberties in the view of interest." And again—"All men are thieves in love, and like a woman the better for being another's property."

At this there was a general expression of disgust. *Captain Macheath* looked at the flies on the ceiling; *Macheath's* mamma suddenly shifted herself with a gesture of loathing; *Mrs. Peachem* glanced at the portrait of her first love in the costume of George the Second; and Trapp, again lifting his shoulder and screwing his head, passed sentence—"Mark it out," and out it went. "Let us go on," said Trapp, and the reading proceeded to the speech of Polly:—

"I know as well as any of the fine ladies how to make the most of myself, and of my man, too. A woman knows how to be mercenary, though she hath never been at court or at an assembly; we have it in our natures, papa: if I allow Captain Macheath some trifling liberties, I have this watch and other visible marks of his favour to show for it. A girl who cannot grant some things, and refuse what is most material, will make but a poor hand of her beauty, and soon be thrown upon the common."

Captain Macheath observed to *Polly*,—"Of course, my dear, you 'll never say that?"

"Certainly not, my child," said the mamma of the captain.

"No, dear; you had better come to the song *Virgins are like the fair flower* at once," advised *Mrs. Peachem*, and so it was determined. The next pause was at the speech of *Mrs. Peachem*:—

"If it had been only an intrigue with the fellow, why the very best families have excused and huddled up a thing of that sort; 'tis marriage, husband, that makes it a blemish."

"Now, sir," said the lady with the portrait of her first lover, "you can never expect me to speak that?"

"Cut it out," said Trapp, the delicate and inexorable Trapp—"cut it out," and thus they proceeded cutting out Gay, reviewed

as poor Quellenec—(see Bayle)—was reviewed by the ladies of the Louvre.

At length, the reading was got through; John Gay was made fit for decent society. The company rose, and were about to leave, when Mr. Trapp observed to the ladies,—"Oh, about the dresses for the new piece? Is Mrs. Sleeve here, John?"

"I've been to the wardrobe, sir, and she's coming down, directly," and ere the words were well out, Mrs. Sleeve presented herself.

"Now, Mrs. Sleeve," said Trapp, "you will take the orders of the ladies for their dresses, and mind and be very particular with the fleshings." Mrs. Sleeve answered with a curtsey the command, and *Captain Macheath*, the *Polly*, and, indeed, all the ladies who had assisted at the purification of John Gay, went to get themselves measured for silk flesh-coloured legs and blue satin slips for a piece of mythology.

"Where, where," asked Trapp, somewhat angrily, "where is Mrs. Centipede? we must arrange about herself and the Cupids."

"Heaven lies about us in our infancy," saith the poet. Mrs. Centipede, the dancer, was evidently of the poet's opinion—hence she always had on hire some threescore children from two to six years old; by virtue of their years, the tuition of their mistress, white muslin frocks, and buckram wings with foil-paper spots, angels of the most agile order. It was a delightful, a touching sight, to see Mrs. Centipede in the midst of her whole sixty, twisting, turning; she like a graceful humming-top, surrounded by little tops with pegs. Mrs. Centipede was an excellent creature; every Sunday she was to be seen at some church. A rival dancer said with a sneer, she attended there to bespeak her pupils as they were brought to be christened: and in many instances, three days after they were short-coated, they could dance. Happy! guileless little creatures! promoted from the vulgarity of mortal childhood to spirits of a heavenly order! Not banished to bed with the rooks and the lambs, but kept awake, curled and painted, to receive at midnight the cheers and loud applause of an adult, discerning public!

"How about my dress for Venus?" asked Mrs. Centipede in a low voice of Mrs. Sleeve, as the dancer slided into the apartment.

"For Venus!" Now Mrs. Centipede was thin and gaunt; her face had something of the gipsy caste, rigidly marked: her hair, which she wore in profusion, was coal-black; and her eyes, large and rolling, were of the like colour. They had a restless action, as if continually watching the evolutions of her sixty

pupils. In her manner, albeit she was Bermondsey born, there was a kind of French polish; how obtained, we know not; though it was once stated by a lady who kept a rival academy, that Mrs. Centipede's first lover was the French Hercules, and won her virgin heart by pulling successfully against two horses.

"The dress for Venus?" said Mrs. Sleeve, "Oh, Mr. Trapp has ordered that to be entirely new."

"Very well," said Mrs. Centipede, with great meekness,—"and for the wings for the children, why, I think old gauze will be as good as any;" saying which, she glided like a ghost away.

"Well, Trapp, have you thought anything more of that matter?" asked a young gentleman, having somewhat unceremoniously lounged into the presence of the proprietor.

"What matter?" interrogated Trapp.

"The—the girl?" answered the young gentleman, with easy self-possession.

"Oh! very true, my lord; the young lady has, I have no doubt, considerable talent."

"Upon my life, Mr. Trapp," said the young gentleman, "I do think she 's equal to anything;" and the speaker smoothed down a moustache, like a bit of mole-skin. "I've known the young lady some time, and, though I don't pretend to know much about plays—the fact is, you begin so devilish early—yet she has very fine eyes."

"Very fine eyes, my lord," and Trapp twisted his head in admiration.

"And her foot, and ankle—upon my honour, I do think in some of your things, Trapp—in what at the club we call leg pieces,"—

"Leg pieces! ha! ha! capital, your lordship—capital."

"I do think she 'd make a good show. I have no interest in the girl, at all—none, I assure you—she 's a pet, yes, I may say, a pet of my sisters, and so I—I thought I 'd drive down to you."

"I 'm sure, I 'm very much obliged to your lordship. Ha! if we only had a few more such patrons of the drama!" and Trapp sighed.

"You know, Trapp, that is, understand—I shall often come to the house; therefore as I shall want a seat,—why—yes—I may say, whatever you give the girl in salary, I'll pay you again in private boxes."

"Your lordship is very good. The young lady can dance?"

"Like St. Vitus.—Mrs. Centipede had her when she was very young. Now, understand, Trapp, it 's a bargain—the engagement

and the private box." Saying this, his lordship walked away, shown out by the proprietor.

And all this time, where was Runnymede? He continued to sit with laudable patience in the back room. For a time, he was an interested listener to the trial of Gay, but his vigilance relaxed, and at length he sank into a deep sleep.

"I 'm sure, sir—I 'm very sorry—I beg your pardon—but I 'd forgot you was here," said John, waking him.

"Well—never mind; now, I hope I can see Mr. Trapp?"

"Mr. Trapp, sir—I 'm very sorry—but"——

"But what?" asked Runnymede, somewhat soured.

"The truth is, Mr. Trapp had ordered the horses—he felt himself a little better—and so, shortly after the reading, Mr. Trapp went out."

"Out?" exclaimed Runnymede.

"Out," repeated John.

CHAPTER VI.

"I HAVE found him—I have found him at last!" exclaimed Jack Runnymede to Earwig, his diligent companion in the pursuit of truth. It was even so; disappointed of an interview with the courteous Mr. Trapp, Jack applied to the porter at the stage-door, from whom he obtained a clue, which, being diligently followed for many days, led him at length to the carpenter. "Now, now our evidence is complete," and Jack's face shone with satisfaction—"now, what can withstand the justice of our cause?" Mr. Crane looked graver and graver, assuring the unsophisticated defendant that, however laudable his endeavours, they were made wholly inapplicable to the case, by the proceeding of the plaintiff. At this Runnymede would smile incredulously, and with invincible complacency observe,—"But I tell you, my dear sir, I have proof, sir—proof—proof."

"Very true, Mr. Runnymede: I have no doubt of it; and very praiseworthy it is of you to have gone to so much cost and trouble for the sake of truth; but when truth can be of no use,"—

"No use!" exclaimed Runnymede.

"We may," continued the placid Crane, "pay too dearly for it, if only to keep it by us."

"Impossible—quite impossible; truth, sir—truth is"——

"Mr. Runnymede," said Crane, interrupting Jack in his fervent

praise of truth, "I envy your simplicity. You are an excellent man, Mr. Runnymede; but if I may say it, a little too romantic. This, sir—the Lord help us! is a wicked world we live in. Perhaps it's right it should be so; but for my part, I think it the duty of a Christian always to take things as they come."

"Especially," observed Earwig—"especially, when the things happen to bring their own recommendation."

"But, Mr. Crane, I tell you, I have the witnesses. I have the man who lost the ducks, the man who was robbed of the handsaw and chisel; the copy of the commitment of John Chuff, alias Arthur Allwork,—and what is more—I have the late turnkey of the county gaol, who—if the plaintiff should endeavour to shelter his iniquity under his 'alias,'—is ready to swear to his identity. And now, Mr. Crane, I ask you as a lawyer and a Christian, whether anything can defeat the justice of my case? What, sir, —as an Englishman dignified by Magna Charta I ask it—what can be stronger than truth?"

"Process by criminal information," answered Crane. "But we shall see, Mr. Runnymede—we shall see. Nothing is certain in this world—and more especially in that part of it, known as Westminster Hall."

"Of course, you would like to see the witnesses?" asked Jack, and he rubbed his hands, as if about to invite Crane to a great treat.

"Just as you please; it can do no harm. Are they in London?"

"Are they in London!" echoed Runnymede. "Mr. Crane, this is a cause in which I would spend the last farthing—shed the last drop of my blood."

"The law is much obliged to you," said Mr. Crane.

"We have had our Hampdens and our Pyms, and our Eliots, to little purpose, if the birthright of"——

"But you spoke of the witnesses, Mr. Runnymede? You say you can produce them?" interrupted the attorney.

"I can, Mr. Crane. It has cost me much trouble—much expense—but, sir, I would have walked overland to Crim Tartary in such a cause. I have the witnesses—have them safe, Mr. Crane, safe," cried Jack, with a triumphant look. "I have taken apartments for them. Nobody save my dear friend Earwig and myself can get at 'em. If they go out, I accompany them—if they stay at home, I lock 'em up. You see, Mr. Crane, there can be no tampering—no tampering. Ha! ha!"

"Very vigilant—very circumspect," said Crane. "You ought to gain the cause, Mr. Runnymede."

"Ought! Must!" exclaimed Jack, very energetically. "Will you dine with me to-day?"

"Not to-day. The truth is, I—I have promised Mrs. Crane to accompany her to the consecration of a chapel in our neighbourhood. But—if you 'll promise to keep early hours—I 'll sup with you."

"And then," said Runnymede, with a gracious smile, and laying his hand upon the attorney's shoulder, "then you shall see the witnesses."

In the evening, Mr. Crane was punctual at the new lodgings of our hero ; but to the surprise of the attorney, learned that Mr. Runnymede and his friends were not at home. Earwig, however, was deputed by Jack to receive Mr. Crane, and assure him of the speedy arrival of his client.

"Mr. Runnymede," observed the attorney, as he warmed himself by Jack's fire, "is a very foolish man."

"Very," replied Jack's "dear friend Earwig."

"This affair will cost him some money—will put him to some inconvenience," said the placid lawyer. "A fine of five hundred, and I suppose not less than six months' imprisonment," rejoined Earwig.

"That 's about it," answered Crane ; "and then the expenses will be something."

"The Runnymedes have always been fools," observed Earwig. "Why, there was Jack's father—I could tell you things about him, that"——

Unfortunately for Mr. Earwig's reputation as a story-teller, a sudden knocking at the door, checked him in his theme, for he immediately exclaimed, "Here he is—witnesses and all !"

"Oh ! I suppose he has been for them ?" said Crane.

"Been for them ? Bless you ! they live here. The fact is, your excellent and stupid client"——

But at this moment the door opened, and the first witness presented himself. He was a tall, burly man, with large unmeaning features. His nose had been cut in two in some Arcadian fray, which injury added nothing to the agreeableness of his visage, or the harmony of his voice. He bobbed his head at Crane and Earwig, and sat down in silence. The example was followed by an elderly man, with a rustic, care-worn look, who seated himself, smoothing his grey hair with his rough hand. "Servant, gentlemen," said a third witness, ranging himself with the others.

"Hope you hav 'n't waited ?" cried Runnymede, running in, and taking both hands of Crane. "But the fact is, the good people here had not been out for two days, and as I wouldn't have them moped, I took them all to see the wild beasts."

"How very kind of you !" exclaimed Crane.

"Never was a kinder gentleman in this world," cried one of the witnesses, made impatient with gratitude.

"Should ha' died but for him, and never know'd what an elephant war like," said another.

"Something like a gentleman," asseverated the man with the injured nose, "took us to Bedlam last Monday."

"Yes, we 've wanted for nothin' since we 've been here," said a bouncing country wench, entering with a child in her arms.

"And, pray, Mr. Runnymede," began Crane, "am I to understand that these are?"——

"Very right," cried Jack, "first business, then supper. These good people are my witnesses. This good man's name is"——

"Giles Hurdle," said the old rustic, rising, and still smoothing his hair.

"Giles Hurdle," continued Jack; "this good man was the owner of the two ducks"——

"Duck and a drake," was the correction of Giles.

"They 're all the same"—Giles shook his head—"quite the same," insisted Jack. "The ducks stolen by Chuff."

"I could swear it through three bibles," exclaimed old Giles.

"A valuable witness, Mr. Runnymede, if—if—but, however, proceed," said Crane.

"And this good man is Joseph Squarewise, the carpenter, who lost the handsaw and the chisel," said Jack, and the carpenter bowed a silent affirmative. "And this good person's name,"——

"My name," said the man with the damaged feature, "is Mark Griggers. I was turnkey three years at Chelmsford gaol, and had the custody of John Chuff."

"There—there—there, Mr. Crane,—can anything be more satisfactory?" asked Runnymede, with glistening eyes.

"And who," inquired Crane, evading an answer, "who may this lady be?"

"Mr. Griggers' daughter, sir," said the girl, with a curtsey, "and this is my little boy."

"And all witnesses?" inquired the attorney, with a malicious smile.

"No—not the young woman; only the fact is, Mr. Griggers had promised to give her a trip some day to London, and"——

"And all things considered," said the late turnkey, "I thought no time could be like the time present."

"I 'm only so sorry," cried Mr. Griggers' daughter, "that baby 's christened.

"Why, my good woman? May I ask why?" inquired the attorney.

"Because, I 'm the greatest sinner as is alive,"—and the mother

looked gratefully towards Runnymede,—"if I wouldn't ha' called it arter that gentleman. He deserves no less, that 's what he doesn't. Would you think it, sir, he 's bought baby this black hat and feathers ? And if he gets the cause—and the Lord send he may ! tho' I know nothing about it—if he gets the cause, I know he 'll gi' baby a lace cap."

"And pray, Mr. Giles Hurdle, what may you think of London ?" asked Crane, in the way of self-amusement.

"Why, sir, I doan't know," answered Giles ; "but I do think all but lawyers be a pack o' rogues."

"Indeed ! And for the lawyers, Mr. Giles ?"

"Why for them, I be sure they be," said Hurdle.

"He 'll make a remarkably intelligent witness," said Earwig confidentially to Crane.

"You were never before in London, I presume, Mr. Griggers ? Ha ! so it struck me. What do you think of it ?" asked the attorney.

"For London," replied the turnkey, "I don't think so much of it."

"Sorry for that," observed Mr. Crane. "Very sorry."

"And as for Tyburn," continued the turnkey, with a melancholy look—"why it quite disappointed me."

"And Mr. Squarewise, what"——

"The supper's ready, sir," was the sudden announcement of the servant.

"Ha !" exclaimed the turnkey's daughter, "and Dick isn't come back. Kept out by that Jonathan !"

"This way, Mr. Crane," said Runnymede, showing him from the room. "We shall find our supper here ;" and Jack led the attorney, followed by Earwig, into another apartment, the witnesses being left to feast by themselves.

"What do you think of the girl, Mr. Crane ?" asked Earwig, winking and nodding his head at Runnymede. "Jack can choose a witness."

"Mr. Earwig," replied Crane with sudden gravity, "Mr. Earwig—I think the—that is, I—I am a married man."

"Upon *my* life ! I insist Earwig, I "—and Jack coloured to the brows at the jocular insinuation of his bosom friend—"I entreat that you give over such levity. The girl is the daughter of the most important witness. Her husband is with her, and"—

"He is ? What ! is he a witness too ?" inquired Crane.

"Not at all ; only as Griggers would have his daughter with him—she of course," said Jack, "couldn't leave her husband, who insisted upon bringing his cousin."

"Well, I meant nothing—'pon my honour, no ; but really,

Mr. Crane, as a man who knows something, don't you think Jack has a fine taste in ribands? How well blue becomes the wench, doesn't it?" asked Earwig.

Mr. Crane almost laid down his knife and fork, and with increased solemnity assured Mr. Earwig that he was a married man.

"What a strange fellow you are!" said the sensitive Runnymede. "As for those ribands, Mr. Crane, the fact is, I—I thought I could do no less than put the witnesses into decent attire."

"I thought they were very smart for their condition," said Crane. "Then you have fitted them out?"

"It cost me very little," replied Runnymede, "and as they were to give evidence for me in a court of justice, why, when I was about it, a gown and a few yards of riband"—

"And a hat and feathers for baby," added Earwig, staring at Crane.

"Didn't make much difference," said Runnymede.

"Well,"—and for the second time Mr. Crane made the declaration—"you ought to win the cause."

"I shall win it," cried Jack. "By the way, I hav'n't shown you a copy of the commitment of that rascal Chuff, alias Allwork. Here it is!" and Jack produced the document, his eyes glistening like the eyes of a bride at nuptial diamonds, as he read it. "There—what can stand against that?"

"I hope it will be received," observed Crane, "but as an honest man and Christian lawyer, I must declare my doubts."

"Aye, you are perhaps right to express yourself cautiously," said Runnymede. "And here—here's his conviction."

"What! for the ducks?" asked the lawyer.

"No. The fact is, the case for the ducks didn't stand; but he stole them for all that. Hurdle's ready to take his oath to it."

"Didn't stand! Why not?" inquired Crane. "Wasn't it proved?"

"Proved, beyond the slightest doubt; only the prisoner had the advantage of a slight mistake," said Runnymede.

"What was it?" asked the attorney, rubbing his hands, and smiling at the anticipation of a flaw.

"Why, the indictment was for stealing two ducks; but it was proved by the cross-examination for the prisoner, that one of the birds was a drake."

"Then of course they could not convict," exclaimed Crane.

"No: but he committed the robbery for all that," answered Jack.

"What a lucky escape!" cried the lawyer, tickled by the good fortune of the prisoner. "What a lucky escape!" *

* See *Sessions' Reports*. 1836, for a similar case.

"But he was a thief for all that," repeated Runnymede, who had no professional taste for chicane to gratify.

"Yes, but if the drake was not admitted against him, my dear Mr. Runnymede—if as I say the drake was not admitted against him,"—

"He stole it," Runnymede averred for the third time, "he stole it for all that." Crane shook his head. "But say nothing of the ducks," cried Jack with animation, "I can go upon the saw—I can stand upon the chisel."

"Let us hope the best," said the pious attorney, "let us hope you may stand upon the chisel."

CHAPTER VII.

The trial—the important trial—was set down to be heard, though, for the sake of Runnymede's witnesses, we are happy to state not before sufficient time had been afforded them to see, under the kind auspices of the defendant, all the sights of the metropolis. As the day approached, Mr. Crane very prudently attempted to prepare his client for the worst; still, we regret to say, with little success, Jack deeming failure impossible. It was in vain that the attorney spoke of forms of court, of the peculiarity of the law of libel—Jack replied to all these intimations with an unbelieving laugh. "There might have been cases," Jack would allow, "which failed from want of evidence; but in a case like his, in which truth was as clear as the light of heaven, to fail was impossible."

The morning came, and Jack Runnymede rose as to his wedding.

As he rode towards Westminster Hall, accompanied by his witnesses, he felt himself an invulnerable champion in the cause of truth. Saint George did not ride out to fight the dragon with greater confidence, with keener ardour for the fray, than swelled the bosom of Jack Runnymede on his meditated destruction of a false attorney.

With the sweetest smile upon his face, and with the airiest step, our hero entered the court. Many friends nodded to him; he acknowledged the greeting with a new smile, and then his eye falling upon Chuff, alias Allwork, he looked as he would have withered him in a blaze of indignation. Mr. Allwork, indulged himself with a slight cough—rubbed his hands—and judged from his manner, turned to whisper something in the ear of his counsel.

The judge took his seat—the jury were sworn. Runnymede

had gazed intently at them, feeling assured that he had never beheld gathered together twelve such honest looking men. The cause was begun; for a full account of which we refer the reader to the law reports.

The libel was proved; and Runnymede's counsel, not being permitted to justify the statements of Runnymede by means of witnesses, contented himself with flourishing before the eyes of the libelled man, the copy of his committal to Chelmsford gaol; and, at the pressing request of the astonished Runnymede, pointing out the turnkey in the person of Mark Griggers, waiting in the body of the court, to be examined. Allwork threw a look at his late keeper, but showed no signs of previous acquaintance. The counsel next touched upon the presence of the owner of certain ducks—upon the ease with which one Joseph Squarewise, a carpenter, might be produced to speak to a certain saw and chisel; and ended his address with a most eloquent appeal to the love of truth on the part of the jury, who under the direction of the judge, found John Runnymede guilty of a libel against Arthur Allwork. When the foreman delivered the verdict, a female in the gallery exclaimed,—"There goes the lace cap of poor baby!" Jack looked up,—and whilst the court rang with laughter, to which, by the way, Mr. Crane contributed more than his due share—beheld the melancholy face of the turnkey's daughter.

"I told you how it would happen," said Crane to Runnymede. "You see—we 've lost it."

"Lost it! it 's impossible that with my witnesses ready—with so strong a case"——

"An excellent case," observed a legal gentleman, "never heard a better case, if—if you had been allowed to prove it."

"And pray—what—what remains now?" asked Runnymede, all astonishment.

"Nothing—but"—and Crane stroked his chin, and stared in Jack's losing countenance.

"But what?—speak out, Mr. Crane! Let me know what remains to be done," exclaimed Runnymede.

"Nothing more than this: you 'll be brought up for judgment."

"It can't be!" cried the unbelieving victim. "Judgment! and what—what follows, then?"

"Why, it 's a very flagrant case," said Crane.

"It is, indeed," said Runnymede.

"To call a man a thief—and a perjurer; it 's a serious matter, Mr. Runnymede," observed the attorney.

"But it 's the truth, sir—the truth—the truth!" raved our hero.

"That may be—I don't dispute it; but you see, Mr. Runnymede, truth in cases such as this is like green peas in winter; if you will indulge in a luxury, you must pay for it. Now, let me advise you—this is an ugly business—therefore, let me advise you to make the best of it," was the counsel of Mr. Crane as he walked arm-in-arm with Runnymede from Westminster Hall, the unappropriated witnesses Hurdle, Squarewise, Griggers, with his daughter, her husband and his cousin, slowly following.

"I wish to make the best of it," said Runnymede, "that has been my wish throughout."

"Well said," observed Crane. "So, authorise me to treat with Mr. Allwork—after all, he 's not so unreasonable a gentleman."

"Gentleman! a thief—a perjurer—a—gentleman, indeed!" exclaimed Runnymede in uncontrolled rage.

"You mustn't say these things; as your lawyer, and as a Christian, I say you mustn't. Now, listen; I 'll make an offer to him, and, perhaps, he 'll be satisfied with a fair sum of money and an apology."

"An apology! Do you think me a Hottentot, Mr. Crane?—a barbarian—a beast? An apology—and from a truth-telling Briton? No, sir! I wonder that the departed great, gathered there"—and Runnymede stretched his arm towards the Abbey—"do not move in their tombs at what is perpetrated *there*," and Jack violently flung his arm from Westminster Abbey to Westminster Hall.

"If you are brought up for judgment," said Mr. Crane, unmoved by the energy of his client, "I won't answer for the term of imprisonment."

"Imprison me! No—impossible. I reverence the laws, and I can't believe it—imprison me! If such an outrage were committed, do you think I have no remedy? Yes, sir—yes; I have a remedy—for, thank God! I 'm an Englishman."

Runnymede, deaf to the voice of his adviser, remained unshaken in his sense of security. "It was enough that Allwork had, by some unaccountable means, obtained a verdict: he would not attempt to push his triumph farther. No—scoundrel as he was—he could not be so utterly lost to shame." Such was the belief of our hero when, after the lapse of some weeks, he was briefly desired by Mr. Crane to hold himself in readiness to receive judgment.

"It can't be—it 's impossible," exclaimed Runnymede. "However, I 'll attend the court—of course I 'll appear—but he never can be so infamous—the law can't allow it;" and with this

belief John Runnymede appeared before the judge, who sentenced him to pay a fine of five hundred pounds, with the further punishment of eight months' imprisonment.

"And for writing the truth?" cried Runnymede, quite aghast.

"A very gross case of libel," observed a barrister to half a dozen professional friends.

"Very flagrant—very gross, indeed," replied five of the six.

Jack Runnymede was conducted from the court by the officer whose painful duty it was to see the libeller safely bestowed in one of his Majesty's prisons. Jack, having seated himself in the coach, ventured to ask his companion "If he had ever known such an atrocious business?"

"Very common, sir," replied the officer; "but yours is rather strong."

"Strong! I—it 's so atrocious I can hardly believe it," said Runnymede.

"Ha! sir, very few words in such a matter cost a good deal of money—fewer words than go to an ounce."

"But it 's notorious—the rascal is known to be a thief and a perjurer," cried Jack.

"What! Mr. Allwork? To be sure he is, sir; and that made it so very simple of you to call him so," observed the astute officer.

"But the business sha'n't stop here—no, I 'm determined it sha'n't—I "——

"We 're very near home, sir," said the officer, endeavouring to soothe his charge.

"I should be a traitor to my country—to myself, if I remained quiet."

"You may be very comfortable where you 're going—with money, sir, everything at the best."

"There is the right of petitioning left me," cried Runnymede.

"You can have a room to yourself," said the officer.

"And with good spirits,"—exclaimed Jack.

"Sorry to say, sir, no spirits allowed; that is, if known: but plenty of wine," was the intelligence of the officer.

"You mistake, my friend. What I meant to say was, that, as a Briton, I had the right of petition."

"To be sure, sir."

"That, therefore, I would address parliament."

"Can't do better, sir—it will help over the time, with rackets."

"Thank heaven! there 's Magna Charta," cried Runnymede.

"And there 's the Bench," said the officer, and the coach stopped at the prison gate.

Runnymede entered the lobby, and was delivered to the keeper. "Thank God! I 'm an Englishman," cried Jack, as he looked around, and saw himself in the court-yard of the prison.

CHAPTER VIII.

The fine inflicted upon Runnymede for his wicked and malicious libel on Arthur Allwork was the least punishment. There were certain expenses which, combined with the disorder of his affairs in consequence of his imprisonment, made it not unlikely that, Englishman as he was, Jack Runnymede might grow grey in captivity in an English gaol, despite the blessings of Magna Charta.

"They can't keep us here—you may take my word for it, they can't," Runnymede would avow again and again to his fellow prisoners for debt, the marshal of the gaol, oddly enough, holding them all the while. "There 's Magna Charta—and, yes, thank God! we 're Englishmen!" And this was, one day, the proud declaration of Jack to a miserable, ragged wretch, a three years' prisoner for a debt of five and forty shillings.

"What 's Magna Charta?" asked the squalid debtor.

"The glory of Britons; it gives us our liberty," exclaimed Runnymede.

"I wish I could get some of it," said the prisoner. "Why don't you try it yourself?—How 's it to be had, in bottles?" asked the fellow, with a grin. "If it is, I suppose that 's why it 's stopped at the gate. Magna Charta!" roared the man, with a horrid laugh.

"My friend," said Runnymede, "respect the laws—remember that"—

"Oh, of course—I must respect the laws. Look at my rags!—ha! ha! feel my soft hands—hands I wish to make hard with work,—but the laws make me take my leisure here, and lounge like a gentleman."

"Is your debt heavy?" asked Runnymede.

"Why, blessings on the laws! yes. It was two pounds and odd, for physic for my dead wife; but the laws—charming laws! made it more than ten. You can't think how a poor man, with all the world at his back—and that 's load enough, my master—must love the laws, when they strike his working-tools from his hand, and send him to walk here, with his fists in his pockets."

"And your debt was only two pounds?" asked Runnymede.

"A shilling or two over; now, it 's ten and more; but then the difference is for bits of paper made by the laws, and dealt out by the lawyers."

"And there is one of the craft," cried Runnymede with some disgust, as a yellow-faced, low-browed specimen of the species crawled by.

"Yes, that 's Blacklamb, the hump-backed lawyer of Clement's-inn. But bless you, sir! I 've no malice against such as he—poor vermin! not I—they can't help it. I should as soon think of blaming a snake for its rattles."

"Then where does your anger fall, if not upon the snakes?" inquired Jack, interested by the quaint earnestness of the debtor.

"Why, upon them that make it profitable to breed reptiles," answered the prisoner; and tossing his head, he abruptly walked away.

The time of Jack's imprisonment flew by, and in a week, it certain arrangements could be made, he hoped to enjoy his freedom, when—for the darling thought had never left him—he determined to obtain redress, even at the foot of the throne, for the wrongs committed upon him. His admiring country should feel proud of him as an Englishman!

We have, however, premised that new difficulties beset Runnymede. His affairs were become desperate, and his liberation was rather to be hoped than expected, even with the sacrifice of every shilling of his property.

"If such things were known to be done by the people in the moon," said Jack bitterly, as he looked over the bill of costs delivered by Crane, "what asses, what fools, what knaves, what villains, we should call them!" Jack tried to read every item, but he became heart-sick ere he had proceeded three feet down the paper. However, Mr. Candidus, Jack's real friend, stirred himself in the business, and after a month's delay, the fine and all the expenses were paid, leaving our romantic hero without a farthing.

"I 'm going—farewell," said Jack to a fellow-prisoner. "When I get out, thank God! I 've the spirit of an Englishman, and can push my fortune: good bye," and Runnymede was about to quit the prison, when he was stopped at the lobby. "It 's all right—you have my discharge, you know."

"Yes—but there 's gate-fees," observed the functionary in the lobby.

"But the debt 's paid—I owe nothing," replied Jack.

"Gate-fees—or you must go back," said the man in authority; and Jack Runnymede, without blessing his stars that he was an

Englishman, begged the money of Mr. Candidus, to rescue the champion of truth from the clutches of the turnkeys.

"You never mean to tell me that I have no remedy?" said Runnymede to Candidus. "If I am an Englishman, there must be justice for me?"

"There is a remedy; but, Mr. Runnymede, by this time you ought to know that nothing in our way is to be done without expense."

"But I am determined to proceed against Allwork; there has been gross perjury; I am determined"——

Mr. Candidus checked Jack's ardour, stilled his roarings for revenge, with these words, accompanied by a most benignant smile. "Mr. John Runnymede, you must know that law costs money; now, before you make an unalterable determination, had you not better put your hands in your pockets?"

There was much in the words, but there was more in the manner, of the speaker. Jack Runnymede, despite his yearnings for satisfaction—despite his strong desire to assert his rights as an Englishman—felt the force of the appeal. Without another word, he wished Mr. Candidus good morning, and sallied into the street.

John Runnymede stood in the highway of sumptuous London, the undone votary of truth. He turned and turned, and again stood undecided, whither to go. "Why—why was I not born a baron in the days of John?" Such was the vain and fretful question of the dinnerless Runnymede. "Why was I born in an age when public virtue is of no account? But no—it is impossible that my countrymen can be dead to the voice of my injuries; they must rise, as one man, to aid me; if I can but make the evil known." And then Jack thought of calling a meeting of Britons to obtain redress of his wrongs. Or—the idea particularly pleased him—if he could get up a procession of his countrymen to march, with appropriate flags, to the Houses of Parliament! He might call a meeting; yes—thank God! as an Englishman, he had that right.

No sooner had the thought possessed him, than Jack became assured of speedy satisfaction. He should be cheered—quoted by his countrymen as the brave assertor of their rights. His life would be written by a hundred glowing pens—his portrait would be carved and printed on wood—it would adorn newspapers—it would hang, with pictures of the cardinal virtues, on the walls of thousands of cottages. Thank heaven! with all his sufferings, he was still proud of his country—yes, with the right of petition, he felt that he was still an Englishman. The power of money might, for a time, be strong—but there was a moral influence which

neither gold, nor rank, nor sophistry, nor tyranny itself could destroy! Jack Runnymede felt his nature sublimated by these ennobling thoughts; and his blood seemed turning to ichor, as he strode, like a giant late for dinner, onward.

Jack had resolved upon the means of action. He would exercise the prerogative of his birthright—he would call a meeting of his countrymen: he would go armed with a petition to the senate—to that august assembly, whose benevolent ears were ever inclined to the complaint of the meanest subject; and, purified of every selfish, narrow feeling, met and meditated only for the subject's good!

With this determination, the penniless Jack Runnymede sought the house of a printer, known to him in better times. Jack, as he walked, composed the few striking sentences that, printed in gigantic type, and exposed to the public eye, would call tens of thousands of Englishmen to the place of rendezvous—where, beneath the canopy of heaven—(for what room, even could he pay for it, would be sufficiently extensive to contain the number of his hearers?)—he would detail his wrongs, and move the adoption of certain remedial measures. Yes, Jack had completed the "call" to his countrymen, and was advanced in his address. The rain fell from a November sky, but Jack, in the ardour of his purpose, felt it not, so completely was he filled with his address to a visionary multitude of tens of thousands. Thus rapt, Jack Runnymede, to the astonishment and amusement of the passengers, unconsciously committed the strangest antics. Still striking or flinging about his arms and muttering "the sanctity of the person of the subject," he sent a harmless muffin-boy into the middle of the road,—and when he rounded a period with "universal toleration," he gave a flourish with his arm that almost knocked to the earth an inoffensive quaker. Twenty times had Jack dwelt upon "the liberty of the subject."—Again he touched upon the glorious theme—"I say, gentlemen, the liberty of the subject cannot be violated! I say that—thanks to the blessings of Magna Charta!—the liberty of an Englishman is inviolable! Neither King, Lords, nor Commons, can lay a finger upon an Englishman, if"——

Jack had not breath to finish the sentence, for a huge hand grasped him by the collar, and a voice, harsh and deep, exclaimed, —"Messmate, we want you."

Jack Runnymede, convinced of the inviolability of the person of an Englishman, indignantly screwed himself round, when he beheld a man in a hairy cap and rough coat, not too closely buttoned to hide a cutlass and a pair of pistols.—The man, however, was not in a sanguinary mood, as he held in his right hand

nothing more than a short, knotted cudgel no thicker than his arm. Besides, he was evidently a good-tempered person if not too much put upon: for he met the burning glances of Runnymede with a smile and a nod, and the heartiest assurance that "he would be nicely provided for."

"My good man," said Runnymede, "you mistake the person—you do, indeed."

"Mistake! I ax your pardon—we 've been arter you this week," said the leader in the hairy cap.

"Me! I—I have not the pleasure of knowing any—any of you," and Jack, aghast, surveyed the faces of the press-gang surrounding him.

"Mayhap not," said the captain of the gang, "but we 're never above beginning the acquaintance. You 're a lucky griffin, I can tell you."

"Lucky!" exclaimed Runnymede.

"Hav' n't you a twin-brother?" asked the captain, with well-affected interest.

"No—not at all—I assure you," said Jack, trembling.

"Well, you 're as like him as one gull 's like another. It 's only three months ago that we fell foul on him, just in this water—and, would you think it?—last Tuesday only—wasn't it Tuesday, Ben?"—and the proprietor of that name wiped his mouth, winked, and answered "Tuesday,"—"only last Tuesday he hoisted his flag as port-admiral of Baffin's Bay. Now, you 're so like him—ha! ha! isn't it his very bowsprit?", and the humourist pointed at the nose of Runnymede.

"Not quite so much bowsed up," cried the critical Ben.

"Quite his run. Well, you are so like, that the Lords of the Admiralty couldn't, if they would, make you less than post-captain. Come, shake out your canvas, shipmate," added the speaker in an authoritative tone, and Runnymede, either through ignorance of the mandate, or with natural obstinacy, moved no step; when, after a very brief pause, he felt the knees of two or three of the gang behind him. Here—here was an affront upon the inviolability of the British biped! Jack Runnymede felt himself almost suffocated with wrath.

"I—I tell you, my good friends,"—and Jack could say no more.

"You may call us friends," said Ben, "'specially when you know what the fat of junk 's like: won't you go to prayers three times in the middle-watch, for all the good we 've done you? Come, heave ahead!"

"What—what is it you want with me?" cried poor Runnymede, in despair.

"Want!" cried the wag of the gang, "want to see how you 'll float, as the devil said when he pulled the marine out of the chains."

"Stay—stay—one minute. Am I"—Jack was in agony as he put what he felt to be a vital question—"am I to understand, that you wish to press me—that you wish to drag me from my home—my?"——

"Why, you know your wife 's tired on you," cried the hairy cap; "you know she is. Bring him along, lads."

"All I ask is this—do you intend to use violence—do you intend to press me for the fleet?" roared Runnymede.

"And nothing less, by ——!" The oath was lost in the clamorous assent of the whole gang, who, like a pack of hounds, hung about the free-born Briton, yelling, cursing, screaming, fighting.

Jack fought desperately: a hundred times he wished for a sword—a pistol—a poker—any deadly weapon. "The law,—thank God—!—the law was on his side, and he might with impunity murder any number of his assailants."

"What a smart hand he 'll make in a boarding-party!" was the derisive eulogy of one of the gang, as Jack, having seized a bludgeon from one of his enemies, cleared a circle about him, and then retreated with his back to a wall. Flourishing his cudgel around him, Jack Runnymede, like a gallant Briton, roared, at the pitch of his voice—"Remember—I warn you—it 's illegal—against the law—in violation of—of—dearest rights—Englishmen—fellow-countrymen—succour—it 's your cause—yours as well as mine—Britons—your—your rights!—your"——

Strange as it may appear to the reader, Jack Runnymede, calling upon the dearest hopes of his countrymen—appealing to them by their most sacred rights—by their love for their homes, their spouses, and their babes,—was suffered by staring Englishmen to be carried, like a carcase, away,—not one British finger moving in his defence! Jack had been seized in the Minories; hence, only a short time elapsed ere he was safely stowed in the Tower Tender. "It 's illegal—you can't do it—you have violated the rights of the subject," cried Jack, foaming; and with his clothes torn to tatters in the struggle, he found himself in the floating prison. "Sir, you as a gentleman must know that this is contrary to the law," said Jack to an officer; "you must know that,"—

"They 've pressed you, have they?" asked the officer.

"They have grossly violated the liberty of the subject," was the reply of Jack Runnymede.

"I don't admire impressment," observed the officer, drily.

"You can't, sir; as a gentleman and a man of education, you must know that a pressed man is"—

"Not worth half a volunteer; therefore, my man, suppose you take the bounty?" suggested the officer.

"Bounty, sir! Although my appearance may not now bespeak it, but I assure you, I am a gentleman," cried Jack.

"Glad to hear it; gentlemen make capital sailors. Away with him," was the brief order of the officer, and Jack with little ceremony was introduced to nearly a hundred companions, among whom were at least fifty victims to a violation of the law.—Jack Runnymede was received by his new friends with a cheer which, at least, betokened hospitality.

"This is a gentleman," exclaimed one of the ragamuffins, as he caught a glimpse of Jack—"this is a gentleman come here to wear out his old clothes," which presently was received with clamorous applause.

Runnymede was silenced—stupified by the scene around him. One roared a song in utter desperation—another blasphemed—a third hallooed—and more than one groaned in bitterness, and sobs as from a bursting heart told the deep torture of the sufferer.

Jack, touched by the intense agony of one man, forgot the acuteness of his own suffering. The poor fellow was gathered in a ball in the corner—his trembling hands covered his face; tears trickled through his fingers; and his whole body heaved and quivered, as if he struggled with some burning poison. He fought against his grief, and yet, at intervals, he could not master it—it would burst forth in querulous moaning.

"What's the matter?" asked Jack—"what's the matter?" Still the man was silent. "What's the matter?" Jack repeated, laying his hand upon the man's shoulders.

"Keep off—or I'll murder you," roared the man, and Jack started as from a maniac. At length, Runnymede ventured to observe—"I'm—I'm in trouble, friend, as well as you—but why take it so hardly?" For some time, the man remained silent, and only received the proffered sympathy of Runnymede with bitter scorn. At length, won by the superiority of his manners, and the kind words of our hero, the man briefly told the story of his present misery.

"I'd been five years at sea. I'd come home—my wife''—and here the sailor grasped his throat with his hand and paused—"my wife, with our little girl,—I hadn't seen the child"—the man writhed with anguish—"I hadn't seen her since she was a babe. My wife and child met me—there was her old father, too—well, they met me at the Docks—we went on—I was going home—I'd forgot something I'd left aboard—I told 'em to wait

at the Black Dog — I went out, turned the street—the gang boarded me, and—and "—and the man dashed his fist against his skull like one frantic.

"And your wife, my friend—your wife?" said Runnymede.

"She 's waiting for me—waiting for me—and I 'm in the Tower Tender!" and the sailor laughed like a demon. "Waiting for me! ha! ha!"

"But there 's a remedy—I tell you, my friend," said Runnymede, "there is a remedy."

"What?" asked the sailor, moodily.

"What they 've done is against the law: every man may plead his *habeas corpus*, and "—Jack Runnymede was proceeding, when the man he was attempting to comfort turned fiercely round upon him.

"Why, d—n your heart!" he cried with intense bitterness—"if you ben't a lawyer."

"Whoop!" roared fifty voices—"whoop! we 've got a lawyer."

"No—no—no! Upon my soul, gentlemen," exclaimed Runnymede, "I am no such thing."

"What are you, then?" bawled two or three.

"I—I—I 'm a pressed man," said Runnymede, in a weeping, puling voice, and the sorrowful tone drew a burst of laughter from many of the hearers.

"Well, but you 're something more than that? What line was you in ashore? No gammon among friends. Speak out, like a man! Warn't you once pumped upon?" demanded a volunteer, whose confident manner, and flippant speech displayed a person of town accomplishments. "Warn't you never pumped upon?"

"Never"—answered Jack Runnymede.

"Nor never in the Stone Jug?" continued the querist.

"I don't know what you mean, my friend," said Jack, very meekly.

"Oh! d—n pride! I mean Newgate, and you know it," was the indignant answer.

How strange are the accidents of life! thought Jack Runnymede; feeling himself become an object of contempt and laughter to the majority of his associates, on the score of his good character and gentility; and with this thought, he briefly stated to his hearers, that he, like most of them, had had his troubles.

"A sneaker, take my word for't;" exclaimed Jack's catechist to his particular companions, who unhesitatingly adopted his opinion.

"Don't despair, my good fellow,"—said Runnymede in a low voice, and after a long pause, to the disconsolate seaman. "I tell you there 's a remedy."

"Remedy! what remedy? Ar'n't we all here, like stolen niggers?—Hav'n't I lost my wife—my child?—torn from 'em, for what I know, never to see their blessed eyes again?"

"Yes—very true—you are dragged from your home,—as you say, from your wife and child—but still you may thank God,"—

"For what?" roared the wretched husband and father.

"Why, that it 's against Magna Charta—that it 's in violation of the law—and that, in short, though treated like a beast, you are nevertheless an Englishman."

CHAPTER IX.

Next morning, a vessel sailed for the Nore with Jack and his companions, the number being augmented by some half-dozen captives made by the gang in the course of the night. To all, not utterly inconsolable, Runnymede dwelt upon the legal remedy for the abuse under which they suffered. "And how, my good friend—how was it, that you fell into their hands?" asked Jack of a melancholy new-comer.

"I was torn from my bed," answered the man, "the gang had heard that I had been to sea—they got in at the window—and"—

"And didn't you resist?" inquired Runnymede.

"I maimed one of 'em, I think—but 'twas no use;—I was hauled off—my wife screaming—the children in their bed clothes crying—my old mother kneeling and cursing the gang,—and—there, mate, don't talk of it," and the man trembled from head to foot.

"Got into your house!" exclaimed Runnymede, "took you from your bed? Why, my dear friend, they can't do it."

"What do you mean, by 'they can't do it'? asked the man, with a scowl.

"Why, it 's against the law! in open violation of that great principle which makes the meanest hut of the humblest Englishman his impregnable castle. I tell you again, my good friend, they can't do it."

"Well, if they can't do it, then I 'm not here; so if you can persuade me to that, messmate—if you can make me believe that I 'm now at home at breakfast, with my—there, let 's have no more of it," cried the poor fellow, choking with emotion.

The vessel arrived at her destination; Jack and his companions were placed on board the guard-ship at the Great Nore, to be distributed to various ships as hands might be required. "Thank God!" said Jack to himself, as he stept aboard and saw several officers—"thank God! here are gentlemen! They must at once admit the flagrancy of the case—yes,—in another hour I shall be ashore." Jack stood eyeing the officers, making to himself an election of one for the depository of his secret, when he found himself violently pushed, and heard a voice braying in his ears, "Tower Tender-men all aft!" and Jack, turning with indignant looks to make a lofty speech to the boatswain's mate, was fortunately hurried on among the crowd of his fellow-voyagers. The list was read, John Runnymede answered to his name, and with his fellows was dismissed. "Why don't you take the bounty?" asked a sailor, whom, from his superior appearance, together with a heavy switch, formed of three pieces of plaited ebony, adorned with a silver top and ferule, under his arm, Jack considered to be a person in authority—the ebony being, no doubt, the insignia of his office. "You may as well have the bounty."

"You are very good, sir, indeed," replied Jack to the boatswain, for it was that intelligent disciplinarian, opening his eyes at the elaborate politeness of the pressed man; "you are very good, sir; but—I have other views."

The boatswain was puzzled; he knew not whether to laugh or swear. He scratched his cheek in doubt, and Jack, with the greatest civility, again addressed him. "I beg your pardon, sir—but I do assure you, I should accept it as a lasting favour at your hands, if you would have the kindness to inform me, where I can see the captain of this vessel."

There was something in the politeness of Runnymede that quite disarmed the boatswain; he felt himself quite overlaid by the fine manners of the ragged pressed man. Jack paused, and smiled in the boatswain's broad blank face for a reply: he then repeated "the captain of this vessel?" (the vessel being a seventy-four.)

"The captain?—why, you see—he 's gone to dine with the admiral—I 'm sorry, we can't man a boat for you,"—said the satirical functionary.

"Don't mention it," observed Runnymede, joining his hands, and making his lowest bow.

"Perhaps the first lieutenant will do?" suggested the boatswain, "he 's next in command."

"You 're very good—very kind, indeed," exclaimed Runnymede, suddenly seizing the hand of the boatswain, who quite unused to

such a mode of thanksgiving from such a person, instantly raised his ebony wand to acknowledge it. He was in a moment disarmed by the vivacity of Runnymede—"the first lieutenant—where can I find him?"

"Just now he's at school—in the gun-room," answered the boatswain.

"What! have you a school aboard?" asked Runnymede.

"And nine-pins, and cricket, and everything you like. Here, Splinters, show this gentleman to the gun-room; he wants the first lieutenant." Splinters, looking at the boatswain, knew there was some game to be played to the cost of the pressed man, and, therefore, with great alacrity conducted Runnymede to the door of the gun-room. What was his astonishment to hear the "evening hymn" chaunted by boys' voices, the school closing every night with that solemnity! Runnymede edged himself into the school-room, and saw standing on each side a desk some half-dozen little midshipmen looking—Mr. Dickson, the first lieutenant, being present—very serious; and at another desk, boys of the second and third class, with the children of the warrant-officers and sailors of the ship. Mr. Dickson very frequently attended the performance of the evening hymn, the master of the ship, a choleric Prussian, whose berth was on the starboard side of the gun-room, as frequently mounting to the deck until the hymn was ended. On the present occasion, however, Mr. Dickson had another duty to fulfil: for, in addition to his official labours, he had taken upon himself the task of watching over the morals, and punishing the transgressions of all the children in the ship; who, although no more than seven or eight years old, were, in common with adults, submitted to the visitation of the cat.

The evening hymn concluded, the punishment was about to commence. The culprit was led in: he was, in the present instance, a pale, thin little boy, perhaps seven years old. He shivered beneath the stony eye of Mr. Dickson, who stood with his old bare cocked-hat hugged under his arm—his withered features set with determination—his shoulders slightly bent—the very personification of stern duty in repose. The child begged for mercy, but Mr. Dickson nodded to the boatswain's mate. The boy was tied up; and the first lieutenant proceeded to dilate upon the enormity of the culprit's offence: he had dared to spin his peg-top on the after-deck, and had more than once been detected trying experiments on the temper of the he-goat, that animal we presume, for his great services to his Majesty's fleet, being an object of particular interest to Mr. Dickson. "Now, little boy," said the first lieutenant, and he seemed overflowing

with kindness towards the offender, "you will be flogged for these offences; you know, little boy, that peg-tops are not allowed in the ship,"—"I didn't—indeed, sir—I didn't," cried the child—"and you know, little boy, that the goat is not to have his beard pulled. Hem! hem! Boatswain's mate,"—and Mr. Dickson, eyeing the cat, spoke quite like a father—"one tail, boatswain's mate;" and with one cord selected from the nine, the child was taught to eschew peg-tops as long as he was afloat, and to have on all and every occasion a particular respect for the he-goats of his Majesty's fleet.

Jack Runnymede was so confounded by the ceremony—so astonished at the importance which Mr. Dickson threw around the peccadilloes of the boy, and more than all, so disheartened by the appearance of the officer himself—that he did not venture to accost him, but resolved to keep his complaint for the ear of the captain alone. "What—what kind of a gentleman is Mr. Dickson?" Runnymede, purely out of curiosity, ventured to inquire of a sailor who had, as Jack thought, a communicative countenance.

"What sort? Why he messes by himself, and sells his rum," answered the sailor.

"Has he been long in the service?" asked Runnymede.

"You can see that by his coat, for he never had any other."

"And does he attend the—by-the-bye," and the thought suddenly flashed upon Jack—"if there 's a school, I suppose there 's a schoolmaster?"

"To be sure; only just now, you see, he 's in a bit of trouble."

"On what account?" asked Jack.

"Why, he thought, you see, he was all right, and let his hair grow; but they 've docked him again."

"And is it against the rules of the service that a schoolmaster should let his hair grow?" inquired Runnymede, wonderingly.

"You see, he wasn't a reg'lar schoolmaster—he was only on trial. He come down here among a batch of marines—a volunteer, as you may be"—said the sailor.

"I 'm a pressed man," said Jack, with a sigh.

"It 's all the same," said the philosophic tar. "Well, they drills him for a marine, and gives him brown bess, and mounts him on the gangway. One day, captain coming up the side sees Nankin's hands—for that 's his name—'Dickson,' says the captain, 'that marine 's either a scholard or a pickpocket.' You know, he might ha' been both, but the captain wasn't to know that—'either a scholard or a pickpocket,' says the captain, 'he 's got such smooth hands.' Well, they wanted somebody to learn the ship's boys, and they tries Nankin, and finds he can read,

and write, and sum; and so they promotes him to the gun-room; and bit by bit, he casts his red and pipe-clay, and has the blessed impudence to let his hair grow."

"I see," said Runnymede, "he wished to quit the marines?"

"Proud as a mermaid with a new gold frame to her looking-glass," said the sailor. "Well, he gets on—and gets on; and from messing with the carpenter in the fore cockpit, he gets right aft with the master's mate—sings songs to the purser's clerk's wife—wears boots when he goes ashore; and more than all, only yesterday—I heard him myself—ordered the bumboat-'oman to bring him off a tooth-brush."

Jack stared as the sailor, with great seriousness, touched on the last vanity of Nankin: then asked, "but what crime has the schoolmaster committed?"

"Why, he got leave to go to Lunnun two months ago. Mr. Highropes—he 's the flag-lieutenant—was in Lunnun, too. Would you think it? The lieutenant going to—I think they call it Fox's-Hall—quite a grand place, who should he see there but the pot-hook marine, Nankin, with a long coat, and a squeeze hat under his arm? Well, when the lieutenant takes out a lady—some 'oman of quality, no doubt—to dance, Mr. Nankin, with no respect to his officer, has the impidence to think of dancing too!"

"And—and was this the only offence committed by the schoolmaster?" inquired the astonished Runnymede.

"And quite enough, aboard a man-of-war, I can tell you," answered the sailor, with a significant nod.

"Why, they never, dared—that is—he was never punished for?"—

"Warn't he? He hasn't got over it yet: directly he comes aboard, captain sends for him; tells him to rig in red again, to mess for'ard, and to give up his truck, that 's his head, to the barber."

"Bless me!" exclaimed Jack Runnymede, astonished at the rigorous discipline. "Has a man no command over his own hair?"

"Not a marine," answered the communicative tar, with great dignity, "we wouldn't stand that. But I think the schoolmaster's beating a little up again."

"Why — why?" inquired Runnymede, interested for the scholarly victim.

"He hasn't been cropped these three weeks; and, more than that, yesterday he rigged out the blue jacket agin. Poor devil! but for all that, no man aboard a man-of-war has any right to—look, mate, there he goes!"

"What! the schoolmaster?—Where?" inquired Runnymede.

"There 's his legs, going up the ladder," and the sailor pointed to a pair of thick, dwarfish limbs, almost bursting through blue worsted pantaloons. The upper part of their owner was unseen by Jack, but he hastily ran from the sailor in quest of it. As Jack ran aft, he was met by a fierce-looking man, who exclaimed, "Hallo! you 're not going to dine with the captain, to-day—are you?"

"No," replied Runnymede, with a simplicity that evidently tickled the fellow, for he growled a laugh like a pleased bear. "No."

"I thought not; well, for'ard, if you please," and he pushed Runnymede before him, who in vain attempted to explain his wishes to the despotic boatswain's mate.

Jack went upon deck, dived below again, looking on all sides for a pair of blue worsted pantaloons. At length, night came on, and Runnymede found himself in a small square place, at the bottom of the ship, which retreat, as he afterwards learned, was the fore cock-pit, sacred to the *lares*—if *lares* are ever found afloat—of the warrant officers. "Where—where shall I sleep?" thought Jack, and looking through a cabin window, he saw, by the light, a venerable person seated at a table poring over a book. Jack gazed with respect, nay, almost with awe, at the reader: never, he thought, had he beheld so old a man. His long white hair, parted at his forehead and carefully adjusted behind his ears, fell in a very stream of hoariness upon his shoulders: his face, of the finest outline, was pale, thin, and but little wrinkled: his large, white eyebrows were bent upon the volume.

"The bible, no doubt," thought Runnymede; who remained rapt by the venerable aspect of that good, peaceful, pious old man. "Yes—it 's plain—he 's the ship's clergyman. Instead of conferring with the schoolmaster, I 'll ask advice of this worthy soul. Who 'd have thought to have met a man with the countenance of a hermit in a seventy-four?" Jack knocked at the door of the old man's berth.

"Who 's there?" asked the aged tenant, in a high, shrill voice, with something of a northern accent. "Who 's there?"

Jack was clearing his throat to answer, when he heard the tittering of voices, and then a rapid movement of feet, and he turned his head to detect the cause. In this position, he received a violent blow that felled him to the deck, accompanied by a high-sounding oath, as he almost believed, uttered by the venerable inhabitant of the cabin.

"D—d dogs!—hope to 'lmighty I 've killed some o' ye!" and

then Jack was convinced that it was the white-haired reader of the bible who had committed the assault.

"What—what have I done?" asked Runnymede, gathering himself up, rubbing his neck, and still upon his knees, staring in the face of the man of ninety winters.

"Hoot! who 's that?" asked the cock-pit Nestor.

"I—I 'm a pressed man," said Runnymede—"but—I—"

"What brings ye to my berth? I thought ye were just one of the d—d midshipmen."

At these words, there was a shout of laughter from unseen parties, between whom and Mr. Mac Acid, the venerable speaker, there was unremitting warfare. Jack Runnymede, hoping nothing from the enraged aspect of the old man, crawled away.

Young midshipmen, like young dogs, very soon discover the antipathies of those it is their destiny to live with; but, unlike the more useful animal, the young midshipman does not avoid the prejudices of the party, but takes every opportunity of revenging himself upon them. Such was the state of things between the juvenile midshipmen of the guard-ship — for, of course, we do not include the midshipmen of forty and fifty—and Mr. Mac Acid, the gunner; for he was not, as Jack had hastily concluded, a divine. Thus, it gave a particular edge to the pleasure of flirting with the carpenter's black-eyed daughter, that the time and place for such relaxation, was "evening, the fore cock-pit," close to Mac Acid's berth. There had been many skirmishes between the gunner and the boys, but the midshipmen generally made a safe retreat, the candle of the gunner being extinguished by the enemy, and sometimes carried off. On the present evening, Mr. Mac Acid, like a thrifty officer, sat conning his volume—for it was not the bible, but his book of stores—with his door ajar, and a heavy cane at his side, prepared at all points for the enemy. When his stick smote the neck of Runnymede, how, for a brief moment did the old man rejoice! To kill a spider, a rat, a pole-cat, a snake, great as may be the satisfaction to those who loathe such things, was as nothing to the delight that Mac Acid would have felt at the destruction of a young midshipman. We verily believe that the extacy of the sport would have carried the old man off.

"Is there no way, Mr. Mac Acid," asked the good-natured captain of the gunner, "is there no way of reconciling you to the young gentlemen? Can't you, by any means, be brought to stomach a midshipman?"

"I think, sir," replied the venerable Mr. Mac Acid, shaking his white head—"I think I could like one in—a pie."

CHAPTER X.

Early next morning, Runnymede was awakened by a voice bawling, "lash and carry—lash and carry;" which command was translated to Jack as an imperative order to the sleepers to pack up their hammocks and bear them upon deck. The order was lost upon Jack, who having no hammock—no bed, no blanket—had lain upon the bare plank. The season was cold November, but, thanks to the number of sleepers, there was no lack of warmth. Once in the night, Jack went upon deck, resolved—despite of the season—to walk until morning in the open air: he was, however, driven down by the sentry, lest—for as a pressed man, he was an object of peculiar distrust—he should attempt to swim ashore. It was past three in the morning ere Jack could fall asleep, and then he was harassed by dreams, in which he thought himself, with twenty bold barons, assembled in a cave at Reigate, concocting Magna Charta. At length, "up rose the sun," and up rose the boatswain's mates; and one of these gentle officers, by the united aid of his voice and foot, awoke Jack to real life. Jack, however, never ate such a breakfast: the savoury cocoa gave comfort to his bowels, and hope to his heart; hence, when the boatswain's mate piped "Tower Tender-men all aft," Jack stepped along the deck "like man new made." Fortunately, he was not aware of the outrage committed upon him during the night, or the consciousness of his ludicrous appearance might have humbled him. On board ship there is a great contempt—perhaps a very laudable one—for long-tailed coats; hence, Runnymede had fallen a victim to the prejudice, for whilst in his slumbers—perhaps at the very moment he was suggesting the most vital article of Magna Charta—his grass-green long-tailed coat was ruthlessly abbreviated into a jacket.

Runnymede stood in a line with his companions of the Tower Tender, whilst a lieutenant-commander, newly appointed to a gun-brig—to be manned, rigged, and sent to sea in a week—looked at the lot to make a selection for his ship's company. As the officer paused before Runnymede, Jack jumped from the deck, and exclaimed, "Thieves!"

"Hallo, my man—hallo," said the officer, "you've lost something?"

"Look, sir,—look!"—and Jack turned his back to the lieu-

tenant, and with his hand behind him, exhibited his dishonoured coat. "There 's thieves aboard—thieves, sir!"

"Shouldn't at all wonder," said an officer, casting his eye along the line of "Tower Tender-men."

"But, my dear sir," cried Runnymede to the lieutenant-commander, who smiled at Jack's simplicity—"my dear sir"——

"Anything in the pockets?" asked one of the ship's officers.

"No, sir—but the—tails"——

"Ha! never mind them—sailors ar' n't monkies, they can go better aloft without tails."

Jack was silent; but he eyed the face of the lieutenant-commander with increasing trepidation, as the officer picked out his men. "If—if," thought Jack, "he should choose me—if—ha! I say," and Jack beckoned to a short, thick creole, with his hair cropped close behind, in a blue jacket, and blue worsted pantaloons. Jack judged of the whole by a part, and knowing the pantaloons, concluded that it must be the schoolmaster who was in them.

"Do you know that man, Nankin?" asked Dickson, the first lieutenant, seeing Jack make signs to the pedagogue.

"Oh dear, no, sir!" replied the schoolmaster, with earnest rapidity.

"He seems to know you; perhaps, met you in London?" said the mild lieutenant, casting one of his feline looks at the swarthy scholar.

"Indeed, sir, no!" said Nankin, the blood rising to his tawny cheek at the word London.

"Silence, my man—silence, you 're not ashore now," said the first lieutenant to Runnymede, who, if he talked at all, assuredly only talked with his fore-finger; for he continued, though in vain, to beckon to the schoolmaster, who in a minute afterwards vanished from the deck.

The draught of men for the gun-brig was completed; the boatswain's mate piped "Halcyon's men, away!" and Jack Runnymede, to his exceeding satisfaction, remained aboard the guard-ship one of the unchosen. The gun-brig was destined to a three years' station at the West Indies, and two of Jack's pressed companions, whose stories we have briefly touched upon, were among the number selected for foreign service; Runnymede continuing to the last to assure them, that no authority *could* press them, and that the humblest Englishman had a castle in his meanest hovel.

It happened unfortunately for Jack Runnymede that, only a few days before his arrival on board the guard-ship, it had been resolved to adorn her hull with a new coat of paint; and though

Jack was neither by taste nor education fitted even for that lowest walk of the art, he was considered by the boatswain's mate to be fully equal to the task of scraping clean the timbers preparatory to the decoration. Being a most servile task, it was allotted to the most ignorant; and the known accomplishments of Runnymede were not calculated to command the deepest respect on board a man-of-war.

"There—lay hold," said a boatswain's mate to Jack, and he held forth an iron implement of about eight inches long, of the shape of a garden hoe.

"What 's this?" asked Jack.

"Lay hold—and no palaver." Runnymede obediently took the scraper, still staring at it with vacant ignorance.

"There—go over the larboard quarter gallery," said the mate.

"And what—what is to be done with this?" asked Jack, with a helpless look, now at the scraper, and now at its donor.

"Done with it! here, come with me;" and the mate griped Runnymede's collar.

"Really, my good sir,"—said Jack, gently resenting the liberty, I must beg that—I assure you—I am unused to"—

The boatswain's mate stared at Runnymede, and then with rare good-temper croaked a laugh, and kept shaking Jack by the collar: then suddenly letting him go, he pushed him violently onward. Runnymede was again about to remonstrate, when he was confused, cowed by the savage demeanour of his task-master, who drove him towards the quarter gallery, where he saw a single plank slung in ropes over the side.

"There—do as he does," said the boatswain's mate, pointing to one of Jack's Tender companions, who, standing on the plank, resignedly laboured with his scraper.

"I—I couldn't stand there if you 'd give me the ship," cried Jack; "and I scrape! Really, my good man, we had better understand one another. I—the fact is, I 'm a gentleman."

"I know'd that; do you think we 'd let anybody but gentlemen scrape the ship? To be sure you are—there, scrape away now till eight bells, or by ——!" and the boatswain's mate nodded at Jack, and winked with terrible meaning. "Over with you!" he roared out, and seizing Runnymede by the collar, the fellow fairly dropped Jack on the plank. "Now—scrape! scrape!"—and poor Jack began to scratch a little harder than a mouse at the rock-like timbers of the guard-ship.

"This is a queer go," said Jack's companion, whose removal to his majesty's navy had, it was more than probable, lightened the labour of some of his majesty's turnkeys. "A very queer go."

"You know," said Jack, continuing to scrape, "you know, they can't do it."

"That 's plain," replied Fogleton; for such was the name of Jack's fellow-workman.

"They may think they can do it, but they can't; they have no power to make us do this—take my word for it, they hav'n't," and Jack scraped.

"Else I don't know what liberty 's like," said Fogleton.

"Liberty, my friend—liberty is the essence of an Englishman's being—thank God! there 's *habeas corpus*," cried Runnymede, scraping.

"That there is," answered Fogleton, looking warily about him for the boatswain's mate,—"that there is."

"And trial by jury, eh?" asked Jack.

"I should think so," replied Fogleton; and he spoke as a man perfectly acquainted with that fact.

"And, thank God! we have Magna Charta," exclaimed Runnymede.

"I believe we have, too," said Fogleton.

"Magna Charta, which insures the liberty of the subject," cried Jack, still scraping.

"So I have heard," remarked Fogleton. "But, I say—if we have all these things, how the devil is it that you and me 's here?"

"Oh! what they 've done, they can't do," answered Runnymede: "there 's a remedy. Thank God! we 're Englishmen."

"Oh, I 'm proud of my country," said Fogleton: "for my part, never wish to leave it. As Englishmen, we ought to be proud of —of—of—everything. Phewgh! if the cold don't cut my fingers to the bone."

"It *is* cold; but you are right, my friend; though we have suffered a little inconvenience, we have our remedy. As you say, we ought to be proud of everything: look at our wooden walls —ar'n't they glorious?" asked Runnymede.

"Very fine; very fine, indeed; specially to sing about, but" —and Fogleton blew his fingers—"but precious hard to scrape."

"Never mind; as I 've said, they can't make us do it—there 's a remedy—there 's"—

"Quarter-gallery, there!" roared the boatswain's mate.

Runnymede, looking up, inquired, very politely—

"Beg your pardon, did you speak to me?"

"Can you play the fiddle?" asked the mate, of Runnymede.

"I could once do something on the violoncello," answered Jack.

"Why, what 's that?" inquired the puzzled mate.

"What is it?" cried Fogleton, contemptuously, "why, a wiolinsellar 's a fiddle's grandfather."

"Can you do anything besides?" questioned the mate.

"I could once play a little on the German flute," replied Runnymede.

"D—d if your fortin isn't made," rejoined the mate, quickly. "Here, tumble up!" and Runnymede scrambled from the plank to the deck, and resigned his scraper in favour of, possibly, a more musical instrument.

"Do they have concerts aboard?" thought Jack, as he followed the boatswain's mate to the waist.

"The fiddler 's dead and the fifer 's sick," said the mate, "and we want to get the water up."

"And do they raise water by music?" asked Jack.

"There! play away," cried the mate, thrusting a sixpenny cracked fife, carefully bound with tin at either end, into the hands of the musician.

"Really, it 's impossible, sir, that I could play on a thing like this—I do assure you," and Jack raised his shoulders, and flung back his arms, with that deprecating look, which probably the reader may have seen in the face of a singer, very ill indeed with an apocryphal cold.

"Blow—blow away!" roared the mate.

"Well, if you insist upon it—I—but am I to play here?" asked Runnymede.

"Strike up!" growled the boatswain's mate; and Runnymede, to the horror of his own ears, essayed a slow movement.

"That won't do!" cried the mate; "playing the fife like a archbishop—strike up a jig!" Jack obeyed; and as he played a quick tune upon the wretched pipe, about a dozen men, hauling a rope, stepped to the tune, raising butts of water from the hold. Jack had only once played through the tune, when the boatswain's mate applauded his performance in the most unequivocal way. "Well, Squeak may die now as soon as he likes, for you 've half-a-gale more wind in you than him." Thus, afloat as on shore, is the old servant forgotten in the new comer! "You 're all right for life," continued the mate, charmed with Runnymede's art—"no; we 'll never let go of you."

Bad as the fife was, it was not to Jack quite so bad as the scraper; and he went on playing several airs—his reputation increasing with every tune. The men paused for two or three minutes, and Jack took breath. At this juncture, and a little before the men were about to resume their work, and the inspiriting influence of music would be again in demand, the short, thick, Creole schoolmaster appeared upon deck. Now Runnymede,

despite of all he had heard of Mr. Nankin, believed him to be a gentleman; and, possibly, a scholar: hence, felt confident of obtaining his sympathy and his assistance. It was Jack's wish to dispatch a letter to Mr. Candidus: "He will, I am sure," thought Jack, "on knowing where I am, bring me to London on *habeas corpus;* yes, thank heaven! *habeas corpus* is not suspended—and I can avail myself of its mercies; for, thank God! I am yet an Englishman."

In an evil moment did Mr. Nankin present himself to the eyes of Runnymede; for, careless of the wants of the water-drawers, Jack stepped away to address the pedagogue; and heedless of the cry of "music," "fifer," "lubber," from the sailors, sought to secure the services of the scholar. "I trust, sir," said Jack, taking off all the hat that was left him, "I trust, sir, that my situation as an unfortunate gentleman will be my apology for addressing you?" Mr. Nankin bent his large black eyes very disdainfully on the miserable figure before him, and, endeavouring to brush up the hair which, by the indulgence of the captain, had been suffered to remain three weeks uncropt, was about to turn away: this action of Nankin brought to Runnymede's recollection the peculiar miseries of the schoolmaster. "Ha! sir," said Jack, staring at Nankin's hair, "they can't do that, sir—they can't indeed."

"Do what, man?" asked Nankin. "Do what?"

"It 's an offence against the person, sir, for a man to cut another's hair against his will. But pardon me, sir,—I was about to say—Oh!" shrieked Jack; "Oh!" and Jack sank doubled to the deck; he then rose, writhing like a snake, and ground his teeth, and his face was purple with pain.

The reader may recollect that, in a by-gone page, we spoke of the boatswain of the guard-ship, and, further, of an implement, his constant companion, formed of three ebony twigs twisted, and bound with metal. Unhappily for poor Runnymede, the boatswain, taking his noon-day walk, espied him absorbed in his address to the schoolmaster, the men vainly calling for "the fifer." Without a word—a syllable—the boatswain, with his huge hand, grasped his weapon, and, as if he would have put the strength of a whole life into one blow, smote Runnymede a little above the hips.

"You want another—do you?" asked the boatswain, shaking the ebony at poor Jack, speechless with pain.

At length, Runnymede was capable of stammering—"You—you—can't do it! You know—you—can't do it."

"What! you want another?" and the boatswain was evidently desirous of a repetition of his peculiar enjoyment.

"Oh! you—you shall suffer for this," cried Jack; "see if you don't suffer for this! I 'm not to be struck in this way—for, thank God!"—

"What! you *will* have another?" and never before did the boatswain exhibit so much self-denial.

"You know, you can't do it!" repeated John, as we think, very unnecessarily.

"Come; blow away! Come—rig out your fife! Blow!" and the boatswain held aloft the plaited ebony.

Oh, life! how terrible are thy changes! Think, gentle reader—think of Jack Runnymede—nursed in comfort—written down gentleman—a man, who had twenty times in his life shown his acute taste by hissing a false note at the opera—think of him, a pressed man aboard a guard-ship—his coat lessened to a jacket—the rim rent from his hat—his shirt in tatters—with a vile, cracked fife in his hand, wherein he is ordered "to blow," for the inspiration of a very mixed company of thieves and vagabonds, and the penalty of his disobedience, a scourging with plaited ebony!

"You won't blow?" roared the boatswain, with rising wrath.

"I—I"—and poor Runnymede, his blood boiling, and his flesh quivering, endeavoured to form his mouth to the fife, but produced a sound very like that of the wind gasping through a key-hole.

"Well, then, if you won't blow," cried the boatswain, and he brandished his weapon.

"What will—what—what will you have?" inquired poor Runnymede.

"Give us 'Jack's alive,'" exclaimed the boatswain, with unintentional satire.

Again Runnymede vainly whistled in the fife, and again the boatswain threatened. Jack caught the glowing eye of his executioner, and, after an effort, burst into full strain.

The required quantity of water being drawn from the hold, Jack hoped that he might be allowed to retire below, and—if he could beg or steal a sheet of paper—dispatch a letter to London. Jack, however was doomed to be disappointed; for, in a few minutes, a cutter, with a large black bull painted in her mainsail, came alongside. Beef, by the half-carcase, was to be hoisted aboard, and again the music of Jack was to lighten the labour of his shipmates. "If I 'm made to play whilst they hoist water and get aboard the beef, I suppose they 'll want my fife at their dinner," and then Jack cursed the vanity that made him publish his accomplishments.

"What! you won't blow?" roared the boatswain, as Jack

stood with one hand to his back, the other holding the fife. "You can't, eh?" and again the threatened ebony drew music from the pressed man. "I see you can play," cried the boatswain; "so, if there 's any hitch, I 'll give you double allowance the next time."

"It's very well," exclaimed Jack, "but you can't do it: yes, yes—there 's *habeas corpus*—you think you have me safe enough, but no—no—thank God! I 'm an Englishman."

About a month had elapsed, and still Jack Runnymede remained the Orpheus of the waist. At length he contrived to get a letter put into the post-office; a letter to Mr. Candidus, who was immediately to obtain the freedom of his client by means of *habeas corpus*. Mr. Candidus, however, acting upon his own discretion, thought, under all circumstances, his client would be more certain of a dinner if remaining aboard a man-of-war. Jack had been of great service to Mr. Sidewind, whose party was now in office; nay, Sidewind himself, newly crawled into parliament through not a very open borough, had a small place in the ministry; hence, he was enabled to serve an old constituent. Moreover, he did serve him.

A letter "on his majesty's service" was received by the captain of the guard-ship, recommending to his notice "an unfortunate person, a very respectable man—a man of superior breeding—named John Runnymede. He was fully competent to the duties of a purser's clerk."

Jack Runnymede was summoned to the quarter-deck, and informed by the captain of his good fortune. He was immediately handed over to the master's mate, Mr. Dark, who took him down to his berth in the after cock-pit, where Jack had the additional advantage of messing with Nankin, the tawny schoolmaster; a person, as he himself averred, of the very highest connexions in London.

Candidus had presented ten guineas to poor Runnymede, with which he was enabled to make a very respectable appearance; although, with strange taste, he refused to purchase the blue worsted pantaloons of the schoolmaster at a few shillings, Mr. Nankin himself having a great many pair of them, and therefore capable of parting with one sample to a friend at a moderate price.

"Capital fellow, Mr. Sidewind—yes, it was no matter how he voted, I always supported him," said Runnymede. "See what it is to have a vote, sir!" he would exclaim to Nankin. "In some countries 'twould have been of little use; but, thank God! I 'm an Englishman."

In a week, Jack Runnymede quitted the guard-ship, being appointed purser's clerk to a frigate.

CHAPTER XI.

"No, sir—no—I shall proceed by criminal information." These were the words of a grey-haired gentleman of sixty to a dingy, squab man of the same age. "He has accused me of peculation"—

"Well, but you know, between ourselves," said the dark man.—

"I know what you 're going to say—that he can prove it—never mind that: I won't let him. I may do as I please on that point, for, thank God! I 'm an Englishman."

The first speaker was a retired purser in his majesty's navy—and no other than Jack Runnymede. The short black-looking man, Nankin, the schoolmaster; who, discharged at the peace, had somehow swollen himself into an attorney of comprehensive employment.

Jack Runnymede had, with great industry, made himself a fortune. He was, therefore, particularly sensitive to an attack that had been levelled at his character as purser. He was resolved to punish the scandal; no matter whether the charge was true or false—he was the best judge of that. The law gave him protection—for, "thank God! he was an Englishman."

Shortly after this, the retired Runnymede was solicited for his vote. "Pray, sir," he asked the candidate, "what are your opinions on the law of libel as it stands—arrest for debt—and impressment?" And putting his arms under his coat-tails, Mr. Runnymede awaited an answer.

"In its present operation I am opposed to the law of libel—certainly, to arrest for debt—and most assuredly to the infamous and inhuman system of impressment," was the reply of the candidate.

"My service to you, sir," said Jack Runnymede, "you don't have my vote. Your politics may be very well for a garden of Eden, sir, but not for this country. What! change the law of libel? Leave open any man of property to the scurrility of shirtless vagabonds—create litigation by abolishing imprisonment for debt—and sweep us from the world as a naval power by doing away with impressment? No, sir; not while I can lift my voice will I consent to this. By losing one or all of these privileges, I should cease to be grateful, as I am, for my country—should no longer bless my stars that I am a Briton—no longer thank God that I am an Englishman!"

ADAM BUFF:

THE MAN "WITHOUT A SHIRT."

CHAPTER I.

Adam lay in bed, and, with his heart in his ears, listened—listened, but heard nothing. A shadow fell upon his face; and, uttering an impatient groan or grunt, and hugging the blanket close around his neck, he swung himself like a resolute pig upon his side, and then sent forth a long-drawn sigh. Hapless Adam Buff!

Inexorable time goes onward, and Adam sleeps. Oh, ye gentle ministers, who tune our dreaming brains with happy music—who feed the snoring hungry with apples fresh from Paradise—who take the fetters from the slave, and send him free as the wild antelope, bounding to his hut—who make the hen-pecked spouse, though sleeping near his gentle tyrant, a lordly Turk—who write on the prison walls of the poor debtor, "received in full of all demands,"—whatever ye may be, wherever ye reside, we pray ye, for one hour at least, cheat poor Adam Buff! Bear him on your rainbow wings from an attic, once white-washed, in Seven Dials, to the verdant slope of the Cerra Duida; for there, saith Baron Humboldt, "shirt trees grow fifty feet high!" There lay him down, under that most household blossom that "hangs on the bough," and there let him cast his gladdened eyes upwards, and see shirts, ready made, advertised on every spray. And there, to the sound of the Indian drum, let him see, disporting on the grass, men and maidens clothed—for in the Cerra Duida the shirt hath no sex—in newly gathered garments, "the upper opening of which admits the head, and two lateral holes cut admit the arms!"

"Are you up, Mr. Buff?" said a voice on the outside of the door.

"Come in," said Adam, awakened by the querist.

The door opened, and a dry, yellowish matron, of some threescore, entered the room. From her perfect self-possession, it was evident that she was landlady of the domain. "Did you see the fire, last night, Mr. Buff?" asked Mrs. Nox, the widow of a respectable baker.

"I heard the engines," replied the philosopher.

"The sky was like the last day," said the landlady.

"It *was* red," remarked Adam.

"Poor souls!" and Mrs. Nox stood at the foot of the bed, rubbing her hands, and looking piteously at the nose and cheeks of Buff, as they came out in ruby relief from a halo of blanket.

"Many burned?" asked Adam, with a slight cough.

"It isn't known yet—but such a loss of property! Two sugar bake-houses, a distiller's, besides the house of a pawnbroker. Lost everything—for I do hear there was nothing insured," said Mrs. Nox.

"Very sad, indeed; but this is human life, Mrs. Nox," observed Adam, with commendable composure.

"It is, indeed, Mr. Buff," and the landlady sighed.

"Yes, this is life! We rise early, and go to bed late—we toil and we sweat—we scrape up and we lay by—we trick and we cheat—we use light weights and short measures"—

"It 's as true as the Bible," said the baker's widow.

"We harass our reason to its utmost to arrive at wealth—and then, when we think we have built our nest for life, when we have lined it with wool, and gilded the outside, and taxed our fancy for our best ease—why, what comes of it? Molly, the housemaid, drops a lighted candle-snuff among the shavings—a cat carries a live coal from under the fire among the linen—the watchman springs his rattle—and, after a considerable time, engines play upon our ruin. Yes, Mrs. Nox, this is life; and as all of us who live must put up with life, grieving 's a folly, Mrs. Nox." Thus spoke Adam.

"It 's true—it 's true, Mr. Buff—but yet to have a great deal, and to lose it all," said the landlady.

"We should always keep philosophy," said Adam Buff.

"A fire-escape?" asked Mrs. Nox, doubtingly; and then, with sudden illumination—"Oh, I see—religion."

"The religion of the heathens. For my part, I feel, if the warehouses had been my own, I could have looked at the devouring element, without ever forgetting myself."

"You may call it devouring, Mr. Buff—nothing come amiss to it. Poor Mrs. Savon!"—

"My laundress!" exclaimed Adam, his feet plunging spasmodically under the blanket.

"She lived at the back—all her linen destroyed," said Mrs. Nox.

"*Her* linen!" echoed Adam Buff, turning very white. "What! all?—everything?"

"Every rag," replied Mrs. Nox, with peculiar emphasis.

Adam stretched his legs, and his jaw fell. Poor plaything of malevolent fortune! Adam was precisely in the strait of an author, whose original manuscript is accidentally given to the flames, no other copy being extant. Plainly, Mrs. Savon had Adam's shirt—and Adam had no other copy. Now, Buff, to give him his due, could have philosophised all day on the destruction of the sugar-houses; but the loss of his shirt went very near to his bosom. Adam lay despairing, when his good genius knocked at the door, then immediately opened it, and walked into the room; the landlady very civilly tripping down stairs.

"I believe, sir," said the stranger, "you are Mr. Buff?"

"I am, sir," said Adam, suppressing a shiver.

"I think it very fortunate that I find you as I do,"—Adam looked a doubt—"I was fearful that you might be dressed and from home." Adam cleared his throat, and still made a cravat of the blanket. "You perceive, I have used no ceremony; it isn't my manner, sir. To begin: you are quite without incumbrance, Mr. Buff?"

"Quite," answered Adam, with much decision; and was in his turn, about to question his interrogator on the object of his visit, when he deferred in silence to the prosperous appearance of the stranger, who—though apparently about sixty—was dressed with all the care of a beau. Twice was Adam about to speak, when his eye fell upon the white shirt-frill—ample as our great grandmother's fan—of his visitor, and a sense of inferiority made him hold his peace.

"Mr. Buff, I have heard you are a philosopher?" Adam meekly inclined his eyelids on the blanket. "Such a man, I have some time sought. It matters not how I have discovered you—that, in good season, you shall know. It is my wish to place in your hands a most valuable, nay, a most sacred deposit." Adam instinctively opened both his palms. "That is, if I find you really a philosopher." Adam looked a Socrates. "This morning, if you please, we 'll enter on the business."

"I will wait upon you, sir, at"—

"No—no—no. I couldn't think of parting with you: when you are dressed, we 'll go together," said the visitor, and Adam's face looked suddenly frost-bitten. "But, bless me! do you rise without a fire, this weather?"

"Man, sir," said Adam, "never so well asserts his dignity, as when he triumphs over the elements."

"Very true—and pray don't think me effeminate, but I always like my shirt aired," said the old gentleman.

"Mine, I hear, was aired last night," said Adam Buff, and the engines rattled through his brain—"though without my consent to the ceremony."

"Ha! a careful laundress," said the visitor, and Adam smiled a sickly smile. "The very man, I wanted," thought the old gentleman; then, rising from his chair, to the keen delight of Adam, he walked to the door. "Real philosophy takes little time to dress, Mr. Buff. If you please, I'll wait below," and the speaker left the room, Buff smiling benignantly on his exit.

Adam leapt from his bed, and securing the latch of the door with a friendly wooden peg, proceeded to array himself with the speed of an actor, and the simplicity of a monk who had never dreamt of flax. However, whilst Adam dresses — why have we no other word to paint the imperfect solemnity?—we have time to explain the purpose of the visitor.

Jonas Butler was a ruddy bachelor of sixty-two, and an ardent admirer of philosophy. We will not roundly assert that he always understood the object of his admiration, but his devotion to it was no whit the less from his ignorance: nay, we question if it was not heightened by imperfect knowledge. Philosophy was his idol—and so the thing was called philosophy, he paused not to pry into its glass eyes—to question the paint smeared upon its cheeks—the large bead dangling from its nose—and its black and gilded teeth—not he; but down he fell upon his knees, and lifted up his simple hands, and raised his pullet voice, and cried—"Divine philosophy!" What a fortunate thing that philosophy is so musical a word! But to the object of Mr. Butler's call on Adam.

To the old gentleman the world was one large easy chair, wherein he might eat his venison, drink his port, take his nap, or, when he pleased, philosophise in grateful equanimity. He had, however, one tender care—in the newly-breeched person of his nephew, Jacob Black; a boy whom he was determined to make a practical philosopher. "Ha!" he would say, as he looked down upon the nascent victim, "the statue is there, if we can but cut it out." And Adam Buff was chosen as the moral sculptor.

The sound of feet was just audible on the staircase, and Mr. Butler, turning in the passage, saw Buff stealing as softly down as though his landlady was sick, and he feared to disturb her. Buff was a heavy man, and yet he trod as upon the points of

nails, and shrugged his shoulders, and vainly tried to compose his wrinkled features. So walks a saint who hath lost his outer cuticle.

Mr. Butler and Adam turned into the street. "A dreadful fire, last night," said Mr. Butler.

Buff clapt his finger to the top button of his coat, lifted the collar a little about his neck, and answered—"Very destructive, indeed."

Butler and Buff walked on. One moment, thoughtful reader. Behold the pair as they recede: could you not, even without our preface, divine from their habits, their separate bearing, the distinctive character of each? Look at Jonas Butler; a thickish, middle-sized person, in lustrous black—his hat as smooth and jetty as a raven's wing—a line of cambric snow above his coat—his foot taking the pavement as it were his own freehold—and, in every limb and gesture of the man, self-comfort, self-content. Now, look at Adam; though a full head higher than his patron, he does not look so tall—he does not walk, but touches the earth as if by sufferance; and there seems at work in his whole frame, an accommodating meanness to lessen himself to the dimensions of his companion. To walk at his full height seems to him a presumption—he bends and limps out of pure courtesy; to make nothing of himself would be little more than to show a due respect to his associate. Never mind Buff's coat—that is a vulgar sign and type of misery—heed not his hat, that has braved as many storms as a witch's sieve—shut your eyes to the half-sole of the left shoe—but look at the man, or men, and tell us, if you do not look upon a prosperous patron who has lured a starveling from his garret by the savoury steam of a promised dinner? Is it so? No, it is not: it is a philosopher leading a philosopher.

Walk on, Adam Buff; and for the urchin trundling his hoop, now sometimes at thy side, sometimes before, sometimes behind thee; frown not on him—he is not what he seems. No; he is not a smutch-faced schoolboy, but Fortune in disguise—the hoop is her dread wheel; and thou, henceforth, art her chosen leman.

"Sir,—he has not a shirt to his back!" How often does this avowal convey the dreariest picture of human destitution. All our sympathies are expected to be up and crying for the victim. A whole nunnery might have wept for Adam; yet was he, in his dearest want most rich. It is true, the conflagration of the preceding night had put our hero to the coldest shift that poverty can lay upon human flesh; and yet, like thrice-tried gold, Adam came forth pure and glittering from the fire.

CHAPTER II.

"HA! the fire!" exclaimed Mr. Butler, pausing and directing the attention of Adam to the smoking ruins. "Bless me! very extensive, indeed," and the two stood and meditated, though with very different feelings, on the devastation. Mr. Butler eyed the scene with the tranquillity of a philosopher who had lost nothing by the calamity; glancing at the blackened walls and smouldering rafters with admirable self-possession. Adam, however, was made of weaker flesh; for there was visible emotion in his face, as he tried to make out the attic of his laundress from the fifty domestic nooks, now laid open to the profanation of the public eye.

"A fine property but yesterday, and now," said Mr. Butler, taking snuff, "a heap of ruins."

"Gone to tinder," cried Adam, brooding over his own peculiar loss.

"Yes—it is hard, to have our household gods played upon—to see our home, filled with all home's sweets, blazing like the pile that burns the phœnix,"—observed Mr. Butler, very profoundly. "To be stripped, perhaps, to the skin in this inclement season," and Butler looked on Buff, who shivered at the touching supposition. "And yet, Mr. Buff, what is nakedness, when we have philosophy?"

Adam was about to answer in, doubtless, a sympathetic strain, when an alarm of a falling wall suddenly brought the crowd upon him. Mr. Butler had already taken to his heels, showing that philosophy can sometimes run like an ostrich; but Buff, either not possessing so much philosophy, or having greater bulk, was slower in his motion, and thus unluckily impeded the retreat of a gigantic drayman, who revenged himself of the impediment, by dealing out to Adam an impressive blow on the cheek. Many of the mob who saw the outrage, saw that the blood of Buff was up, for he turned round, looking death, and instinctively clenching his fists. "A fight! A fight!" exclaimed the crowd in a burst of pleasure, and some providently called for "a ring." The drayman stood prepared—Mr. Butler, who had philosophically looked on, approached Adam; it was an eventful moment for Buff, who stood, breathing heavily, and measuring the figure of his assailant "Better strip, sir," said a disinterested counsellor from the crowd —whilst another, who had stuck his tobacco-pipe in his hat-band to devote himself more entirely to the service, said, in the blandest

tones, his eyes twinkling up in the face of Buff—"I 'll hold your coat, sir." The offer seemed to decide Adam, for he placed his hand to his top button, and when the crowd hoped to see a fine anatomy, Buff pulled still higher the collar of his coat, cast a look of scorn on the grinning drayman, and loudly proclaimed him to be unworthy of his notice. Saying which, he tried to step from the mob, who closed about him, and, with derisive yells and hootings, hung upon his heels. However, the reward of Buff was near; for Butler made up to him, and, squeezing his hand, exclaimed, "I honour you, Mr. Buff—I reverence you; you have shown a philosophy worthy of old Greece,"—(it was lucky for Adam, he could not show a shirt)—"you have shown yourself superior to the low and ignorant assaults of—ten thousand devils!" shouted Mr. Butler, in a higher key, and leapt like a kangaroo. And, with all his philosophy, well he might; for the individual who had offered to hold Adam's coat, having been repulsed in his kindness, had seized the hose of one of the fire-engines, and, with unerring aim, had deluged not only Buff, but his patron. A roar of laughter from the crowd applauded the skill of the marksman. Mr. Butler stood dripping and melancholy as a penguin. Three times he called, at the top of his voice, "Constable!" and "constable" was kindly echoed by the mob. However, no constable appearing, Mr. Butler called the next best thing—he called a coach. The coachman obeyed; and, descending from his box, opened the door: for a moment, however, he paused at the reeking freight before him; however, humanity and his fare prevailed, and he admitted the half-drowned men, and touching his hat and striking-to the door, he asked if he should drive "to the Humane Society?"

"To —— Street," said Mr. Butler, being too wet to understand the attempted joke. Away rattled the coach, the wags among the crowd shouting—"Do you want umbrellas, gentlemen?" "I say, coachman—why didn't you wring 'em before you put 'em in?" Mr. Butler sat as silent as the image of a water-god; and Buff uttered no word, but shook like a poodle new from the tub. The coach arrived at Mr. Butler's house. "Well, sir, what is your fare?" asked Mr. Butler, freezingly.

"Why, sir—let me see—six shillings," said the coachman, very confidently.

"Six shillings!" cried Buff—"why, your fare is"—

"I know what my fare is for passengers—but we charge what we like for luggage."

"Luggage!" exclaimed Buff, and he looked round for the *impedimenta*.

"Luggage. The fare itself is half-a-crown; very well—the

three-and-sixpence is for two buckets of water." Mr. Butler meekly paid the money, without even alluding to the philosophy of the extortion.

"Walk in — walk in—excuse me—but a minute," said Mr. Butler, in broken syllables, shaking with cold, and preceding Buff into a most comfortable parlour, wherein a fire glowed a grateful welcome. The host hurriedly stirred up the coals, and instantly quitted the apartment. Buff, being left alone, silently "unpacked his heart" against the ruffian who had drenched him—then eyed the fire—and, every man believing that he can poke a fire better than his neighbour, again vehemently stirred the coals, and expanded his broad back to the benign influence of the caloric. As it crept up his anatomy, his heart dilated with hopes of good fortune; and his ire against his enemy began to escape with the steam. "It was well for him I had no shirt," thought Adam. (Simple Buff! it was better for thyself. Thou mightest, it is true, have been declared the conqueror of a drayman—when thy very destitution palmed thee off a victor of thine own passion. The juggling of fortune! when what seems to the unthinking world pure magnanimity, may only be a want of shirt.)

Adam stood, with all the fire at his back, and all his philosophy in his eyes. He surveyed the apartment, furnished with a scrupulous regard to comfort, and thought of his own home in Seven Dials. Struck by the contrast, in the humility of his soul, he felt for a moment a creature of a different species to that inhabiting the nook he stood in. "Thus it is," thought Adam, bending his melancholy eyes upon the glowing carpet—"thus it is, one man walks all his life in silver slippers upon flowers, whilst another—yes, another, better than he," Adam could not suppress the comparison, "treads upon sanded deal from the cradle to the grave. One man is doomed to feed his eyes with luscious pictures"—(Mr. Butler had on his walls some charming dinner-pieces),—"whilst another turns pale at a milk-score." These truisms were unworthy of a philosopher; but then, Adam had had no breakfast: they were certainly beneath a man despising all creature-comforts; but, then, Buff was soaked to the skin. This latter accident was but too evident, for he stood at the fire enveloped in steam. Solomon's genii, released from their brazen vessels, never rose in clouds of denser vapour: a millowner might have wept to have witnessed such a waste of motive power.

"Bless me! what a smother!" suddenly exclaimed a feminine voice; and Buff, at the sound, cast his coat-tails off his arms, and, coughing, loomed a little out of the surrounding fog. The speaker, seeing it was not the chimney, but a gentleman, who smoked,

was about to let fall a curtsey, when Mr. Butler, entering in a hurry, prevented the ceremony. "Mrs. Black, my sister," said the host, "Mr. Buff;" and the introduction over, Mr. Butler, with a warm cloth morning-gown upon his arm, made up to his guest.—"Now, my dear sir, you had better put off your coat; you see, I—I have changed," and Mr. Butler complacently glanced at his rich ruby-coloured dressing-gown, lined with fur, to his toes—"Come, or you 'll catch your death of cold," and the benignant host pressed the garment upon Adam.

"Cold, sir?" said Buff, with an inexpressible smile of contempt at the suggestion—"I hope, sir, I have learned to subdue any such weakness."

"Nay, now, I insist—you are wet through—you *must* take off your coat," said the hospitable Mr. Butler.

Buff put on a still more serious look, assuring his patron, that even if he felt the wet inconvenient—and which he further begged to assure him, he did not—still he would keep on the reeking garment as a matter of principle. "Consider, sir," said Buff, securing the top button of his coat, and bending his brow,—"consider, sir, what a miserable thing is man, if a pint, nay, a quart of water is to distress him. To despise the influence of the elements has ever been my notion of true philosophy. When we think of the Scythians, sir—of the Parthians—nay, of our own painted progenitors, the ancient Britons—when we reflect on their contempt of the seasons—of the blaze of summer, and the ice of winter—how inexpressibly little does man, that lord of all created things, appear, creeping beneath an umbrella!"

"As you please, Mr. Buff," said Butler, astonished and delighted at the stoicism of his guest, "as you please; though I think you practise a little too severely. For there is no certain proof that even Diogenes did not turn up his barrel when it rained."

"What! wont the gentleman change his coat?" asked Mrs. Black with all the kind surprise of a woman. "Why, he 's very wet," and with a passing shadow on her face she glanced at the stream that had meandered from the coat into the polished steel fender. "Very wet," she repeated.

"Wet!" exclaimed Mr. Butler, unable to repress his benevolence—"aye, I 'm sure, Mr. Buff, you 're wet to the shirt."

Adam spread out his fingers over his heart, and with a firm voice replied, "Not at all, sir; I assure you, upon my honour—by no means."

"At all events, Mr. Buff, you 'll take a little brandy?" said the philosopher in the furred gown; and as he spoke, the brandy was brought in. Filling himself a bumper, Mr. Butler pushed the

bottle to Adam, who, apparently unconscious of the action, filled his glass. "I assure you, Mr. Buff," and the host looked a world of meaning in the face of his ingenuous guest—"I assure you, the real spirit—there 's a curious history about that brandy—I could tell you *how* I got it."

Adam was above vulgar prying; therefore, filling his glass a second time, he gravely observed—"It is worthy of remark, Mr. Butler, that there is no nation so savage, no people so ignorant as to be shut out from the light of distillation."

"Very true, Mr. Buff; it is hereby that the philosopher recognises the natural superiority of the human animal."

"From pine-apples to simplest grasses," continued Buff, calmly sipping the brandy, "man ransacks the whole vegetable kingdom for a false and fleeting enjoyment. The reflection is humiliating," and Adam emptied his glass.

Mr. Butler, absorbed by the merits of his brandy, observed—"It comes direct from France."

"It may have been broached before," said Buff, in allusion to his doctrine.

"Oh, dear no! Don't think it—certainly not," said Mr. Butler, with some vivacity; alive to the virgin character of his liquor. Adam bowed.

By this time, the coat of Adam, attacked by the fire without and the brandy within, became sufficiently dry to insure him from the pressing invitations of Mr. Butler to change it for another garment; and although Mrs. Black continued to look at the habit, it was not its humidity that attracted her attention. We have before insinuated that Adam's coat, like the cloak of the famous ale-wife, Eleanor Rummin, immortalised by the roughest of court poets, was—

"Wither'd like hay, the wool worn away."

Hence, the lady wondered when her brother informed her that "Mr. Buff would stay to dinner." Indeed, she ventured to cast a look of remonstrance, instantly smiled down by the complacent Mr. Butler, made more than usually genial by French brandy and Siberian fur.

"He is a most extraordinary man—a wonderful man," said Mr. Butler in a low voice to his sister. "You see—you hear—a perfect philosopher,"—and the old gentleman pointed triumphantly to Adam, who, seated in an easy chair, his feet stretched out, his hands in his breeches' pockets, and his mouth open, slept and snored profoundly, his senses sweetly shut up by the strong liquor and blazing fire.—"See—he stands on no ceremony; though a perfect stranger, he falls asleep."

"I call it excessively rude," said Mrs. Black.

"What women think rudeness," observed Mr. Butler, "is often the composure of a well-poised mind. Had that man lived in Greece—had he only lived two thousand years ago,"—

"I wish he had," said Mrs. Black, and she looked at her steel fender.

"His head would have descended to our mantel-pieces. My dear Betsy, you have no idea of the self-denial of that man." Mrs. Black cast a feminine glance at the brandy-bottle. "None whatever. Had you seen the magnanimity—the utter contempt with which he received a blow—as I live you may observe the mark on the left cheek,"—

"Without returning it?" asked Mrs. Black.

"Without condescending to look at the rascal who struck him. And then, when he was wet to the skin—no, I never knew such stoicism—I never"—

At this moment, Adam awoke with a deep-mouthed yawn, and flinging his leg still further out, the whole heel of his shoe came down like an axe upon the tail of a little spaniel, that like a pad of black velvet lay at his foot, and had uncurled its thread-paper queue for the sole purpose of having it chopped upon. The blow being given, the dog, as in duty bound, yelped and howled like forty dogs, and its mistress instantly taking it in her arms, increased its yelping twenty fold. A common man would have been disconcerted at the mischance, the more especially as the injured party was the property of a lady. Buff, however, was above such weakness; for he leisurely raised himself to his full length, and a distant room yet ringing with the cries of the spaniel, he tranquilly remarked to Mr. Butler—"I have often, sir, been struck by the inequality of fortune suffered by dogs. Here is one, couched upon a pillow—fed with chicken, sweet biscuit, and new milk; caressed and combed, and decked with a silver collar, yea, sheltered like a baby from the wind and rain; and here is another, harnessed in a truck, fed with offal or fed not at all—beat with the stick of a cruel master,"—

"Or kicked with his iron heel," said Butler, drily.

"Or kicked with his iron heel,"—repeated the imperturbable Buff—"sleeping on stones, or"—

"Dinner is ready, sir," said the servant.

Buff immediately left the whole canine race to their varied fortunes, and straightway followed Mr. Butler to the dining-room, where he found a new guest in the person of the family doctor, earnestly pressed by Mrs. Black to stay and dine. Mr. Butler, philosopher as he was, dined just like a common man; and though Adam Buff had shown himself an extraordinary person under other

circumstances, at table he was very little above an average feeder. There was but little conversation during the repast, and that taken as a whole not more than ordinarily interesting.

"Mr. Buff, will you favour me with a potato? Stay, they don't seem very choice; and in the article of potatoes," said the philosophic Mr. Butler, "I cannot admit of mediocrity."

"Right, sir; very right, sir," said Adam Buff; and then with a severe look—"a potato, sir, like Cæsar's wife, should not be suspected." Many a judge with a high character for impressiveness, has passed sentence of death with less solemnity than was manifested by Buff in his opinions on potatoes. But, to give Adam his due, he was one of those rare persons who by their manner elevate and dignify whatever they condescend to touch upon. Let Buff talk of shrimps, and he would look so big, and talk with such magniloquence, that it would be impossible to think his shrimps a whit smaller than other people's lobsters.

The cloth removed, Buff relaxed a little from his philosophic sternness, and in the playfulness of the moment, proffered an almond-cake to the spaniel, seated on the table immediately before its mistress. The dog—says the naturalist—is a generous animal: there are, however, many exceptions to the rule; nor is it to be wondered at, considering the kind of people amongst whom dogs are sometimes brought up. Now, Mrs. Black's spaniel was famous for its beauty and its ill-temper; never since the birth of folly did any living thing so presume upon its long ears. Hence, when Buff advanced a cake, the spaniel resenting the injuries of its tail, barked most vehemently.

Mr. Butler, looking at the dog and then at Buff, said to the latter—"*Timeo Danaos, et dona ferentes.*"

"Pray, Mr. Buff, don't tease her," said Mrs. Black, "I can't answer for her temper."

"We shall be the best of friends," said Adam, who continued to press the sweet bribe upon the spaniel. Now, Adam, though, as appeared in a former page, an observer of dogs, knew not the extent of their vindictiveness. Thus, he continued to press and press the cake, whilst the eyes of the spaniel were lighted up like two topazes, and its bark grew more dissonant. It was only the work of an instant; but, when Adam thought, in his pleasant way, to force the cake between the long white teeth of the furious little animal, the creature, stung by the new indignity, sprang forward, and bit Buff through the fleshiest part of his arm. Adam jumped up—but he swallowed the unuttered oath! Mr. Butler looked alarmed; and the professional gentleman mildly inquired, "Has she bitten you, sir?"

"I knew she would," said Mrs. Black, passing the ears of her favourite through her fingers.

"You had better take off your coat, sir, and let me look at the arm," said the doctor, and Mrs. Black, still fondling the culprit, rose to retire.

"By no means," said Adam, with vivacity, and begged Mrs. Black to remain. "It 's nothing—nothing at all," and, with a very pale face, he swallowed a glass of wine.

"Now, really, Mr. Buff," said the host, "you push your stoicism too far—upon my word you—why, the little beast has drawn blood—yes, she has bitten through your very shirt."

"No, no—not at all—oh, dear no," said Adam, pulling up a smile to his face ; whilst Mrs. Black ceased to caress the dog, and looked seriously at Buff.

"Should the animal be mad," remarked the professional man, "I need not, to a gentleman of your intelligence, even hint at the consequences."

"Bless me ! Mad ! Now, really, Mr. Buff, your coat must come off," said Butler, with great earnestness.

"I am sure, sir, there is nothing to be alarmed at," said Mrs. Black, having given the dog in charge to her servant to lock up —"nothing at all ; yet it would be satisfactory if the doctor were only to look "—

"Don't disturb yourself about it, madam," replied Adam, very blandly—"I assure you, I don't feel it."

"There is nothing like providing against the worst," said the doctor. "I can cut out the wound and cauterise the flesh, and you 'll be comfortable in your mind in five minutes." Adam turned white, red, and yellow at the words.

"Certainly—certainly," said Mr. Butler, "for, only think, if the dog should be mad—now, take off your coat."

"I am sure there is no danger, but "—urged Mrs. Black—"if she should be mad,"—

The doctor had taken out his case of instruments, and, with Mr. Butler, was pressing upon Adam ; who felt it necessary to make a vigorous demonstration of his will, in order to keep his coat upon his back.

"Gentlemen—Mr. Butler," said Adam, with great earnestness, —"I—I am no believer "—the voice of Adam faltered—"in—in canine madness. I have no faith in it, and will submit to no operation. And even if my opinions were otherwise, I—I could not pay so ill a compliment to Mrs. Black, as to suppose that any dog belonging to that lady could, by any possibility, be out of its senses. I trust, sir," said Adam to Mr. Butler, at the same time throwing a side-look at his sister, "I trust, sir, that when a man

takes up philosophy, it is not incumbent upon him that he should lay down gallantry." Adam delivered himself of this in a manner that silenced all opposition. Mr. Butler again took his seat at the table, again considering Adam the first of stoics: the doctor said nothing, but thought the wounded Buff the greatest of fools; whilst Mrs. Black retired from the room, admiring in the generous stranger so wonderful a combination of the nicest delicacy with the strongest fortitude.

CHAPTER III.

'Well, Betsy, and what is now your opinion of Mr. Buff?" Thus asked Mr. Butler of Mrs. Black, the morning following the assault of the spaniel.

"I trust," said Mrs. Black, evading a direct answer, "that nothing serious will come of the bite. I 'm sure I wouldn't let Mr. Buff know the dream I had just before I woke"—

"Dreams! A man like Mr. Buff is no more to be moved by dreams than the Great Pyramid. What was the dream, Betsy?" asked the brother.

"I thought we were all walking down Aldgate, when suddenly Mr. Buff started at the pump, foamed at the mouth, and ran down Fenchurch-street, barking like a dog."

"I never knew such a practical philosopher," said Mr. Butler. "I have met with twenty people who could talk Zeno, but here is a man who continually acts him. You should have seen the moral majesty with which he received the blow of the drayman. A common man would have stripped and fought."

"Especially of his size," observed Mrs. Black, upon whom the figure of Adam had had its natural weight.

"And then to be soaked through his shirt, and think of it no more than if he had been sprinkled with lavender!"—

"He must have excellent health—yes, he must be very strong," said Mrs. Black.

"And when bitten by a filthy beast of a dog,"—continued Mr. Butler.

"I have given it away," interrupted Mrs. Black.

"To think of it no more than the prick of a pin. Nineteen men out of twenty would have gone mad with the mere apprehension of madness. Mr. Buff finished his two bottles with the equanimity of a bishop."

"And then his politeness," urged Mrs. Black. "To refuse to show his wound out of respect to my feelings!"

"There never was such magnanimity," said Mr. Butler.

"Or such sentiment," added Mrs. Black.

"Well, then, Betsy, do you not think Mr. Buff, of all men, the very man to direct and ennoble the disposition of my nephew? Do you not think him the very man for your son?"

Mrs. Black had a still higher opinion of Adam Buff; she thought him the very man for herself; and it was only three months after the introduction of Buff into the house as philosophic tutor of the little boy, that he became the lawful guide and instructor of his pupil's mother. About a fortnight after the ceremony, Mr. Butler died quite unexpectedly.

Does not the fate of Adam Buff prove that he who is loved by fortune may take no care for a shirt?

We regret to add, that the conduct of the prosperous Adam tended to strengthen what we believe to be the fallacy of ill-nature; namely, that men often flourish from the very want of those merits, for which they are accidentally rewarded.

Adam Buff had not been married six weeks, ere he had been held to bail for beating, with very little provocation, two watchmen and a coalheaver.—He had discharged the favourite servant of his wife for having accidentally sprinkled him with about a spoonful of clean water; and had ordered the Persian cat to be drowned, for that, in pure playfulness, she had struck her talons through his silk stocking, immediately stript from the leg for the eye of the family doctor. And, then, what a life did he lead the laundress!—"I have washed for many, many partic'lar people," said the poor woman, with tears in her eyes, "but never—never—never in all my life did I meet with a gentleman so partic'lar in his shirts as Mr. Buff!"

MATTHEW CLEAR:

THE MAN "WHO SAW HIS WAY."

CHAPTER I.

"With such an excellent property, too! Ah, sir!"

And, as the speaker touched upon property, his voice trembled, and into either eye there stole one large tear, a diamond of the first water.

"Ah, sir! if Mr. Clear had only seen into himself; for with such a property!"—

The truth is, Matthew, though the dimmest owl, had, in his own conceit, the vision of an eagle. The snail that carries its eyes at the end of its horns had not a more projective look. Seeing nothing, he could to his own satisfaction peer into the very essences of things. But presuming with the reflective gentleman above—we shall duly return to him—that Matthew never did descend into himself, shall we not pause ere we wonder at or blame him? Did you, sir, ever descend into a coal-mine, a tin-mine, or, for you have the look of a traveller, into a salt-mine at Cracow? Surely there must be a sudden suspension of the breath—a rigidity of the fingers clinging to the thing that hurries us from the light of heaven—a dizzying fear of what we go to meet? Yet what is all this—what this sinking below some hundred feet of earth to the solemn descent of a man within himself? What is this going through antediluvian strata in the darkest and most dangerous hour, to the awful sinking into our own soul? There may be green grass flourishing at the very mouth of the mine—flowers blossoming about it—but what, what is below? As we sink are we not astonished at the gloom? See we not incrustations of the meanest things where we thought we hoarded gems; and, arrived at the bottom where we hoped for a stream of living water, and a ray of

comfortable light, we find no drop to wet our withered lips—and our heart palsied with dread—we grope in darkness, in substantial night ?

Matthew Clear was the sole son of a wise stock-broker. But though he inherited his father's money, he did not come into the paternal sagacity whereof the cash was the golden fruit. It is true, Matthew possessed from nature an inexhaustible fund of conceit, which only wanted good luck to be received and registered as penetration. Falling, as our story will show, upon evil days, men scrupled not to call him a fool, when—had only another card turned up—he had, with the self-same faculties, been dubbed a sage. Such, however, is the fate of mortal man—such the opposite rewards that wait on chance ! Luck, mere luck, may make even madness wisdom. Our Matthew was not lucky.

At eight-and-twenty, Matthew had not, if we except the possession of ten thousand pounds, a single care in the world. Rich, and without relatives, he stood aloof, bright and lonely as a gilt weathercock. For business—direct business, he had no genius. Indeed, such deficiency was in his case to be expected. His father,—good buried man ! had toiled through fifty years of life —had been especially ordained and appointed to make money for an only son, the said only son being on his part expressly begotten for the single purpose of spending the accumulated thrift.

We know not a more interesting object than an unsuspecting young man, left alone in this world of temptations, with ten thousand pounds. Who would not rather hug secure mendicity ? The beggar lies by the road-side, and, like a lizard on a bank, basks in the sun, a careless vagabond ; but where the refuge, where the tranquillity for the hapless animal born to civet ? To the simple inheritor of thousands, there is open to him only one dreadful way to seeming peace. Soon, very soon, Matthew became certain of this truth ; for he was speedily hunted, and at the same time, by two mature spinsters and three experienced widows. Five women ! and Matthew, be it remembered, was only eight-and-twenty.

" Most beautiful diamonds ! " cried Matthew, as he received a necklace from a thin, long, rather yellowish feminine hand : "most beautiful diamonds ! " and he looked at the effulgent bait with his one peculiar look, ever called up when he wished to see his way. Matthew lolled on a couch in the handsome room of a most handsome and particularly respectable boarding-house : near him, at his very fingers'-ends, sat a timid, sallow daughter of Eve. Though the lady looked emphatically thirty-four, sure we are she was but thirty-three. In a word, she was a most plain woman, most elaborately accomplished. Yes ; Miss Julia Lac

possessed the surest, the most lasting beauty. Lips wax pale—
—skin turns—eyes grow dim, but the mathematics endure for ever. What is fragile loveliness, looking as though it lived on lilies? Now Julia Lac was a virgin roll of human papyrus.

Still Matthew sat, and—the necklace hanging across his sinister palm—he still continued to see his way. Would we might paint the thousand objects that floated before him! We must content ourselves with a few women, all of whom, curtseying and bridling, looked wedding-rings at Matthew. Now, one with most significant finger would point to a very respectable freehold, duly parcelled into woodland, stream, and meadow: she and the scene would pass, and enter a second candidate, carrying as a scroll, a bank security. A third—a fourth appeared; and Matthew sat intently seeing his way. Rapt, he lightly passed his thumb along the necklace; and, as at the touch of an enchanter, there rose before him a most ravishing prospect. All that India boasts of rich and beautiful beamed upon him. He saw fairy-land, with all the countless wealth of Solomon, and his legendary genii. And there, by a spell, was transported the lady from his side. There, the queen of that radiant, teeming spot, stood Julia Lac; who, with one hand upon her maiden heart, and the other pointing to her property, said very audibly, at least to Matthew—for love has at times long ears—"This and these are thine!" Matthew winked, and when he looked again—miraculous vision!—he saw himself enthroned in highest state upon the whitest elephant.

We assure the reader that Matthew saw all, and more, much more, than this: yet, in his own niggard, constant phrase, he had only seen his way. Of this truth we could print the strongest certificate, namely, the certificate of Matthew's marriage with Miss Lac; an event to be dated only three weeks and some days from the time of his day-dream. All his acquaintance called Matthew a happy man; he denied not the imputation, but would droop one eyelid, duck his chin, and briefly sum up the attractions of Mrs. Clear by more than insinuating that before he committed matrimony he had—seen his way.

Self-surrendered, the intoxicated couple quitted London, winging their way to a rustic, myrtle shade, for the honey month. Mrs. Clear, even at the end of the four weeks, with the most flattering susceptibility, assured her husband that she could dwell there for ever. How loathsome was the town become to her—how poor—how frivolous—how hollow! Why, at least, for another month, should they quit the dear retreat? Matthew's blood glowed,—simmered with happiness at such appeals; he was suffused to the very nails with hymeneal satisfaction; but Julia must not forget—there were matters to be settled—she

had received no letters about the property—and, for the sake, not only of themselves—and Matthew looked with a gay wickedness into his wife's eyes—for the sake, not only of themselves,—this he repeated, expanding with the tautology — they could not continue to go on there in the dark. Matthew meant they must see their way.

CHAPTER II.

With a thousand silent adieus to Honeycomb, did Mrs. Clear resign herself to the chaise; for, as she beautifully said, her heart was held by the very jessamine. Arrived in London, the married pair found fervent congratulations subsided into tepid compliments, and were soon abandoned to their own resources. In seven weeks, the happy couple were become reasonable man and wife, as the following breakfast dialogue will certify:—

"My love," said Matthew, "I thought you had given that filthy bird away?"

Thus spake the husband, as a loud laugh and a libertine exclamation from a great grey parrot split upon the ear of the complaining helpmate.

"My dear," returned the wife, with conjugal indifference, "is it my fault if I find Nabob so essential to my happiness?"

Another shrieking laugh from the great grey parrot.

"Happiness!" cried Matthew, as though the wife of his soul had spoken something treasonous to the marriage state. "Happiness!" and Matthew jerked his chair, looking wonder at the audacity of woman.

"Ha! ha! ha!" chuckled the parrot; "ha! ha! ha! Hooked him, by —— !"

Perhaps this is the place to give a brief history of Nabob. The bird, when very young, had been presented to Mrs. Clear by a handsome Company's officer, who survived the gift barely a month, being carried off by a native fever of India. On the lady's passage to England, the bird attracted the attentions of the captain of the maintop, and Julia being an invalid, Nabob was surrendered to the care of his admirer. Mr. John Rogers had a tender heart, and a sure hand. Like all sailors, he was born the natural enemy of a shark. Every idle moment would he lay in wait for his foe; and, on such occasions, Nabob was never absent. We have said John Rogers was expert; he was also somewhat vain-glorious; for, never did he strike a shark, but he roared

and shouted—"Ha! ha! ha! Hooked him, by ——!" What was to be expected of a parrot of any capacity perched on the cathead, continually listening to these notes of conquest? The bird was no dull scholar; and in less than three weeks, to the admiration of the crew, and we must admit, to the passing disquietude of his mistress, the parrot laughed and shouted in the very key of the triumphant angler. It is true, that, in the brief day of courtship, Mrs. Clear resolved to part with Nabob; indeed, twice or thrice, when Matthew pressed his suit, the chuckle and the exclamation of the creature broke somewhat dissonantly on the conference, making Matthew pause, and reddening the cheeks of the fluttering spinster. But in the final interview, when Matthew boldly made the offer, and, breathless, stood waiting life or death—to be anticipated in her reply by the ever-laughing, ever-shouting bird, passed the temper of the kindest mistress. As an earnest of her future obedience to Matthew, she declared herself content to sacrifice Nabob. Then, the lady was Miss Julia Lac: now, was she Mrs. Matthew Clear.

"Madam, how is it possible? I say, how is it possible,"—

A great statesman, in his advice to young ambassadors, counsels them to take snuff: when sticking for a word, or wanting a moment to baffle a query, the box, as he insinuates, gracefully assists the hesitating. Matthew, failing in syllables, and not being a taker of snuff, threw himself upon a muffin. Mrs. Clear could not speak, but, turning her head with extreme dignity from Nabob to her husband, she looked a very thick volume. We say she could not speak; for at the moment she held between her lips a lump of sugar—the sixth—for the epicurean beak of the parrot! Sympathetic reader, imagine a seven weeks' wife staring at you with withering reproof in her eyes, and a lump of sugar held mockingly between her teeth! For Matthew, the vision of a death's-head biting a cross-bone had not so confounded him.

The breakfast was nearly finished, when the servant appeared with two letters. Being directed to his master, they were handed to his mistress. Mrs. Clear broke a seal. Had she at the same time broken her heart, she could not have published the damage by a louder shriek. Matthew jumped upright, and ran, or rather slid, to his suffering wife. The poor soul was blue-white with anguish! He was about to fold her in his arms, when, with a subtle power borrowed from grief, she repelled his attention, at the same time depositing him on a distant sofa. Matthew drew his breath, and, though he stared, for once could not see his way. Mrs. Clear, recovering her self-possession, cried—"wretch!"

The tale must be told. The fatal letter was from a lawyer intrusted with the repair of the wounded affections of one of the ladies to whom Matthew, as a gentleman, was contracted. The lady, being deserted by one man, had no other remedy than an appeal to twelve. Plainly, the action was commenced; and the damages due to the heart of the forsaken were moderately estimated at three thousand pounds. What was left to Mrs. Clear but to exclaim "wretch?" Had Matthew from the first impressed upon his future wife the sacrifices he was ready to venture—had he only hinted to her the possibility of other claimants—she would, we are convinced, have exhibited her magnanimity, and, spite of all, have wedded him. But to be tricked into marrying a man with six or seven hearts bleeding at every pore about him, what woman of delicacy could placidly endure it?

Left alone, for Mrs. Clear had retired for another handkerchief, Matthew began to calculate all the chances. Damages might be flatteringly heavy; there might, possibly, be more than one action—women were so vindictive! Still, had he not, with every deduction made, married the richest of the five? Were not the Indian possessions of his wife—were not her jewels more than trebly worth the best of any other offer? Matthew smiled in self-affirmation; bobbed his head; rubbed his hands. All things considered, he was fully convinced that he had—seen his way.

"In this sweet mood," as the poet sings, Matthew cast a glance at the second letter, yet unopened. With a slight tremor, he broke the seal; and as he broke it, Mrs. Clear, with vermilion eyes, re-entered. Matthew, unconscious of the presence of his injured, yet attentive wife, read on. In a second, Matthew, his cheeks, like lead, exclaimed—no! we will not sully our paper with so prodigious an oath. The reader, however, must not think it was lost upon Mrs. Clear, for had the demon of mischief suddenly clawed her husband through the floor, we doubt whether she would have screamed so loudly—whether, clasping her hands and sinking upon the chair, she would have portrayed such eloquent dismay! Nevertheless, the unshaken Matthew approached his astonished wife, and, striking the letter with what old Fuller calls a "dead hand," he puts this unadorned, this naked query, to the partner of his fortune and his bed: "In the name of the devil, ma'am, what is this?"

"Mr. Clear!" cried the lady, all her spirits conjured to her eyes by the diabolic exhortation.

"Look here, ma'am; I am written to for five hundred pounds for a diamond necklace!"

"Well, Mr. Clear?"

"Well? Why, I know you showed me a necklace, but—eh? —it can't be?"

"You said the diamonds were very beautiful, and—and I took your judgment."

"Judgment! D—— it, ma'am!" (Mrs. Clear shuddered)—"Weren't they your own?"

Mrs. Clear, curving her neck gracefully as any swan, said "No."

"No! What! not some of your extraordinary diamonds—not some of the family jewels?" roared Matthew, and he looked aghast. Not getting a reply, again he shouted—"Not your own?"

"No."

"Ha! ha! ha! Hooked him, by ——!" was the unpremeditated, and untimely proclamation of the artless parrot.

Matthew, seizing a knife, glared with the eyes of a butcher at the bird, which, as conscious of the murderous intent, flew to the extended arms of its mistress. Matthew stood a moment, then fell, as though stabbed to the heart, into a chair. He waxed white and red—cold and hot—played with his fingers upon the table—vehemently rubbed his calf—twitched his neck-cloth—and then, with an air of settled desperation, ventured to look for further particulars into the face of his wife, at the time assiduously pressing the seventh lump on the self-denying parrot. Matthew groaned.

Now, Matthew was not a man to groan without good and sufficient reason; for though few moments had elapsed since the eloquent burst of Nabob, yet had Matthew, struck by the omen, reviewed a thousand circumstances, solved a dozen riddles, tallied fact with fact, questioned, answered, compared, deduced. What he had lost, with what he had not won, came in terrible contrast upon him; and assured that he had not—seen his way, he groaned! But, it may be urged against him—to grudge a necklace to a wealthy bride, to a woman dowered with almost an Indian province, was the malice of a miser. Very true; yet, by some subtle association, the necklace was to Matthew a connecting link with all the Oriental possessions of his spouse; that gone, he was superstitious enough to give up all beside for lost. In such despair—and though man and wife are but one flesh—he viewed his unoffending partner with the eye of a cannibal. Now no woman less deserved such a look.

"Five hundred pounds for diamonds for *that* neck!" and Matthew ground every syllable with his teeth—"Ugh! I 'd sooner lay out the money in blisters."

Mrs. Clear started up; and, like a woman of real sensibility, burst into tears.

Matthew was left alone with the parrot. Nabob evidently felt the delicacy of his situation; for cocking his head, leering his eye, and working his black tongue, he edged himself sidelong from the extended fingers of Matthew, like a vulture, seeking to truss him. Securing the door, that he might the more surely effect his sinister design, Matthew stealthily pursued Nabob, who hopped from chair to sofa—from sofa to table—from table to fire-screen, evading his follower, until, enveloped in a shawl of his mistress, flung over him with gladiatorial precision by his master, he was soon panting in the hands of the destroyer. Certain we are, that Nabob had resigned himself to sudden death; at his neck he already felt the merciless thumb and finger. "Not body's death but body's banishment," determined the clement Matthew; and, lifting up the window, he delivered himself of a most pestilent remembrancer. Ere Matthew was well ensconced in his dressing-room, Nabob, from the summit of a neighbour's chimney, was contemplating a trial flight to the Surrey hills.

CHAPTER III.

When a man is not to be convinced by an earthquake, what argument can successfully be applied to him? Vain was it that Mrs. Clear assured her enquiring mate that the late terrible convulsion (it was very minutely described in all the journals,) had swallowed up every rupee of her Indian property, leaving her nothing in the world save a lively trust in the affections of a husband. Matthew remained a sceptic; for, though his wife discovered the greatest anxiety on every new arrival, expressing a hope that something might be saved, Matthew would grin incredulously, asking her if her memory would serve to make an inventory of her losses? As the earthquake had proved such a timely friend, it had doubtless not taken all? These sneers he would urge with unrelenting assiduity; but Mrs. Clear—high-minded woman!—disdained to reply to the insinuations. Calmly, and with touching resignation, she would, on such occasions, raise her eyes to heaven, and ask, "What sins she had committed to be married to an atheist?"

All this time Miss Camilla Brown—such was the name of the injured plaintiff—slept not on her wrongs. It is true that, mollified by Mr. Downy, the pacific solicitor of Matthew, the lady entertained certain hints at a compromise. Downy had a

heart of honey, and a tongue of silver; a gentle, persuasive, excellent little man, with a real friendship for his client, whom he had known from a boy.

"Ha!" Matthew was wont to soliloquise, "had I not kept my marriage secret from Downy, he had enquired for deeds, and then—and then"—and then, we can take it upon ourselves to affirm, Miss Lac had still remained an unplucked bud.

"Well, Mat," said Downy, at his last conference, "I 've made the best of bad. I—where 's your wife?"

"Gone to Dorking," replied Matthew, impatient of the superfluous query.

"Dorking again! But I come on business. I've offered the plaintiff five hundred pounds, and I think she 'll listen to reason."

"No doubt," said Matthew, drily, "'tis a good round sum for the trouble."

"I tell you, Mat," urged Downy, in a soft yet impressive tone, "if she goes into court with those letters, you 're not safe for a thousand."

"If I had but seen my way, I had never written," said Clear with unnecessary emphasis. "That a man should lift a pen against himself! 'Tis a sort of suicide," moralised the defendant. "Five hundred pounds! Well, if I must, I must."—Downy nodded satisfaction.—"But if ever I have a son!"—

Downy turned his grey eye on Matthew; then, looking upwards, stared at the portrait of Mrs. Clear. Matthew felt the look to be ingeniously murderous; for it slew the unbegotten. From that hour, Matthew never had the hardihood to enjoy even a possible child.

"I suppose," said Downy, "you have heard that Mrs. Melon, and"—

"Another action?" asked the conscience-stricken Matthew.

"No, she 's married—so you 're safe from her. But your young widow, Mrs. Undercrust"—(Matthew gasped)—"Ha! that was a miss, indeed!"

"Phew! She hadn't a penny certain."

"No; but now her uncle 's dead,"—

"Dead! Confound it," said Matthew, and he looked ready to weep, "now she must be very comfortable."

"They say, fifteen thousand," remarked Downy, who unconsciously again glanced at the portrait of Mrs. Clear; then recollected himself—took up his hat—gave a silent squeeze to Matthew, and left him to the sharp reproach of broken protestations.

One morning, some weeks after the visit of Downy, Matthew

sat in his easy chair, exhibiting a most perturbed and anxious countenance. Mrs. Clear was from home; by the way, she was gone to Dorking. From his looks, it was certain that Matthew could not see his way. He took up a book—he threw it down—he paced the room—he stared into the street. At length, he went out. Having wandered in St. James's Park a couple of hours, he returned home. After the lapse of two more hours, the servant announced—

"Mr. Felix!"

Matthew jumped up to meet the visitor, but immediately sank again into his chair. Truth to say, ill luck never had a more significant retainer than Mr. Felix. He looked with a dead black eye on Matthew—shook a sharp, white face—elevated his shoulders, and said, or rather croaked, "Mr. Clear, I am very, very sorry"—

"Lost? lost?" asked Matthew, suffocated with anxiety.

We may here inform the reader that Mr. Felix was formerly head-clerk to Mr. Downy; and that his present object was to inform Matthew of the verdict—not ten minutes returned by a conscientious jury, in the case of Brown *versus* Clear. The reader will remember that we spoke of a compromise. Certain it is, that the plaintiff, won by Downy, had consented to take five hundred pounds with costs: the money was to be paid the next day, when Mr. Felix, who had recently set up for himself, assured Matthew that if brought into court, the plaintiff, left to his adroitness, would not recover a sixpence. To this he pledged even his reputation. Matthew—seeing his way—broke with his old friend Downy, and gave the case to Mr. Felix, who again and again, in his own graphic and anatomical phrase, declared that "Miss Brown had not a leg to stand upon."

"These things *will* happen," said the comforting Mr. Felix; "the damages"—

Matthew, in a state of strangulation, gasped—"How much?"

"One thousand five hundred pounds!"

The features of Matthew changed like a dying dolphin. "One thousand, five—why—you told me,—yes, you swore, she hadn't a leg to stand upon."

"As a lawyer, sir, I was justified in the assumption; but after what had passed between you and Miss Brown, you, sir, must have known better."

"Passed—between—us?"

"Oh, Mr. Clear! a case of rock couldn't stand against such letters. Not a dry eye in court; even his lordship moved; and three times the counsel stopped to recover himself. Seven ladies

fainting, and three in strong hysterics, taken from the gallery. How could you write such letters ?"

With this interrogative, and a passing complaint of great exhaustion, Mr. Felix departed to dine.

(Though we anticipate the event a few weeks, we will here state, as an evidence of the mighty power of love, making the lion to lie down with the lamb,—that such was its influence over Mr. Felix, that, though previously opposed to Miss Brown, he subsequently married the lady, wisely adding his own bill of costs to her private damages.)

To return to Matthew, who sat staring and stunned. The unequivocal triumph of his epistolary talents, weighed with him not a feather against fifteen hundred pounds. At length Matthew began to vociferate. "Fool ! fool ! And when I thought I saw my way ! Fifteen hundred ! fifteen ! and then the costs ! Oh Lord ! In all, two thousand pounds ! Two thousand ! How Downy will triumph ! how he 'll chuckle ! how he 'll exclaim "—

"Ha ! ha ! ha ! Hooked him, by —— !"

Matthew stood transfixed. Was it "but a wandering voice," or was it, indeed, Nabob in the flesh ? Another laugh dispelled all doubt ; Matthew, opening the door of an inner room, beheld the bird of evil omen ; beheld—

"Tippoo, my dear, where 's your bow ?"

Thus spake Mrs. Clear to a fat little boy of about eight years old, with glittering dark eyes, coal-coloured hair, and a primrose complexion. The docile infant drew up to Matthew, greeting him with a truly oriental salutation. Matthew, without the slightest return of the elaborate civility, glared at his wife. Mrs. Clear, with an amiable attempt at conversation, taking off her bonnet, observed, "she had been to Dorking." This she said in a tone of explanation to the bewildered look of her husband, who, however, was far from satisfied with the intelligence. "He knew—she was always going to Dorking—but—who—who the devil was Tippoo ?" His wife, with a confidence peculiar to herself, explained.

"A burden had long weighed upon her heart ; she could no longer live beneath the pressure. Tippoo was a helpless orphan. She had long known his unhappy parents : she might almost say his mother and herself, bred together, were one. In his last moments, she had promised the father to nourish and protect the little Tippoo. She had brought the dear infant to England—had placed him with a nurse at Dorking. But for the visitation of providence, which had swept away her property (she hoped, however, she had resignation), out of her own means, she would

have reared and educated the little love ; but since the earthquake "—but here, weeping was triumphant.

Though the presence of Tippoo was thus satisfactorily explained, the sudden advent of Nabob still remained a mystery. There never was so lucky an accident ! Tippoo, during his residence at Dorking, much frequented the society of certain mercenary naturalists abounding in that neighbourhood ; we speak of bird-catchers. On the morning of the day of Mrs. Clear's last visit, Nabob, keeping jocund company with rustic linnets and plebeian sparrows, was caught in a net with a dozen of his low friends, and immediately recognised and claimed by the delighted Tippoo. A guinea rewarded the bird-catcher : and thus Mrs. Clear in one day repossessed herself of all (except her husband) she held dear in the world,—Tippoo the orphan, and Nabob the parrot.

Mrs. Clear had heard of the verdict ; and though considerably shocked at the sum, besides being much hurt at the warm, libertine tone of her husband's epistles, her conduct on the occasion was all but angelic. Mrs. Clear breathed nought but comfort and content. Perhaps the genial season had its influence. It was a lovely July night, and Matthew was melted.

" Indeed, it was a heavy sum ; but a cheerful economy would soon replace it. And, after all, what an escape ! For what," exclaimed Mrs. Clear, with a look of horror, " what, my dear Matthew, if you had married such a woman ! "

Matthew sat on the sofa, one hand beside him, the other thrust beneath his waistcoat. On his immediate right sat his wife in a novel position. She had both arms about her husband's neck, with her eyes following his eyes. On Matthew's left knee, after much unseen assistance on the part of Julia, sat little Tippoo, all his faculties absorbed by a large scarlet apple. At an end of the sofa was perched Nabob, silently devouring buttered toast, a vegetable he had much missed in the fields of Surrey.

" Is he not a sweet fellow ? " asked Mrs. Clear, turning her husband's head to Tippoo. " And then so mild—so tractable ! Yes, Matthew, he will—he must win upon you ; you will find in the dear child a son "—(Matthew cast up his glassy eyes toward the portrait,)—" an affectionate son ; and, yes, you will be to him as a loving father ? " Matthew sat with his tongue like a stone in his mouth. " Eh, Matthew ? " and Mrs. Clear continued with every query to tighten her arms about her husband's neck. " Eh, Matthew ? " At length, in self-defence, for a dark tinge stole upon the good man's cheek, Matthew uttered a sound which Julia confidingly received for " yes."

" I knew you would ; and you will foster him, and educate him as a gentleman, and provide for his future wants in this

stormy, wicked life—eh, Matthew ?" and Julia's arms were still at Matthew's neck. "Eh, Matthew ? I say, eh, Matthew ?" and Mrs. Clear raised her voice with every question, squeezing, too, with growing force.—"Eh, Matthew ?"

This time, Matthew becoming decidedly purple, cried loudly —"Yes, yes !"

"Ha ! ha ! ha !" hooked him, by —— !" and the parrot finished his buttered toast.

CHAPTER IV.

The expenses of the law-suit, various debts contracted by Mrs. Clear in her maidenhood, together with the professional education of Tippoo, in a few years reduced Matthew's ten thousand pounds to little less than four. Unhappily, Mrs. Clear, for all her solitary hint at cheerful saving, had not learned "to sink with dignity." Until awakened by the ring of the last guinea, she lived in the delusion of the unbroken ten thousand. It is true, her imagination was tinged with oriental extravagance ; much was to be allowed for her breeding ; though Matthew, we grieve to say, was quite devoid of the necessary charity. Nay, sorry are we to add, that as he lost his money, he lost his temper ; as he became poor, he became less endurable. Indeed, so surely did his manners fall with his purse, that when suddenly deprived of every shilling, he appeared—aye, even to many of his warmest friends—an incorrigible monster.

"Very well, Mr. Clear, very well ; you know best : but sure am I that Simpson 's a villain." Thus, with feminine foresight, one day prophesied Mrs. Clear. Matthew, seeing his way, smiled contemptuously : and though he spoke not, he felt, to his own satisfaction, more than a match for Simpson. Had he condescended to reply, he might, we think, have ventured a like ingenuous vaunt to that really proclaimed by a modern master of the revels.

"Beware, sir, beware of that Mr. Bradford," whispered the friendly warning. "Sir," replied the mirror of managers, with an air and look of questioned genius,—"Sir, Mr. Bradford may think himself a cunning rogue ; but, sir," and the speaker towered and dilated with a consciousness of power, as he coined the expressive comparative,—"but, sir, he shall find that I can be a cunninger."

"Ha! what? Simpson—why, the very man in my thoughts," said Matthew, as Simpson made his appearance; "humph! sit down." But Matthew, despite his hospitable address, looked ill at ease. His eye fell from the face of Simpson, and now, wandered, quite unconsciously, to Mrs. Clear's portrait; and now, dwelt sleepily upon the carpet. Julia rose from her seat; and, uttering half-a-dozen eloquent footsteps, quitted the room; we say eloquent, for even the dull, the guileless Simpson, understood the disdain conveyed in them.

Matthew sat, as though his chair became every moment hotter and hotter; and his face, glowing from a dirty yellow into a dingy red, betrayed the increasing warmth. On the other hand, Simpson showed a countenance of stone. Observing the confusion of his friend, he, with exemplary politeness, silently awaited his convenience. Preluding the act by a short cough, Matthew jerked his chair, took the hand of Simpson, and squeezing it with the fervour of a Pythias, said or sighed—"My dear Simpson, I am so sorry,"—

"Not a word—not a syllable, my dear friend. Since you can't oblige me with the thousand,"—

"Between ourselves, my dear boy, the extravagance of Mrs. Clear is—but no, not even to you should I—can I—expose my own wife. I thought I had the money—I"—

"I wish you had, with all my soul. But, at once to put you out of agony, I am come to tell you, that I don't want it."

If, before, Matthew warmly pressed the hand of his friend, he could at this moment have embraced him. Yes, no sooner had Simpson declared his independence, than Matthew would have done anything to serve him.

"Indeed," added Simpson, after a brief pause, "'twas very lucky that we didn't purchase"—

"Lucky!" cried Matthew, and his jaw worked like the jaw of a corpse galvanised;—"lucky!"

"Very lucky; for, you must know,"—and here Simpson lowered his voice, took out his box, and impartially showering the snuff up either nostril, continued with syllabic distinctness,—"you must know, that the bonds we were to buy together, have to-day gone down to nothing." So saying, Simpson vanished from the room, leaving Matthew fixed in a chair, an exanimate pauper.

A few words will tell the rise and progress of this domestic tragedy. Simpson and Matthew were bosom—nay, as Simpson thought, pocket-friends. Thus, when Simpson, speaking on the best secret information, assured Matthew that a timely purchase of certain bonds must inevitably "lead to fortune," and

consequently to fame,—at the same time, asking for the golden intelligence, the temporary loan of a thousand to participate in the venture, Matthew, in a rapture of gratitude, and with a religious exclamation, promised the cash. However, Matthew was no sooner left alone, than he began to see his way. Why should he pay so dearly for mere advice? Why should not he himself reap the harvest of his own thousand? The tempter of man triumphed over friendship; for, incited by the devil, Matthew invested every shilling of his fortune in the aforesaid securities, wholly unmindful of the thousand pounds sacredly pledged to the believing Simpson! Thus, seeing his way, Matthew looked upon stark beggary. We think Simpson had an inkling of the sudden destitution of his friend: we believe it, from the calm, cold manner with which he touched upon the fall of the bonds; from the spark of malice that lighted his dull eye as he glided from the apartment.

What was left to Matthew? In no man was the love of country more deeply rooted; and yet, on the shortest notice was he prepared to wean himself from England—to cross the sea—to become an alien and a wanderer. Yes; without breathing a word about the vision, he clearly saw his way to New York. It may prove the worth of Matthew, when we assure our readers that many, many in London, inquired most earnestly of his prospects. Matthew employed, as he conceived, the surest means to baffle such amiable curiosity. Indeed, believing himself unequal to the pang, he even took no formal leave of his wife; but promised himself, when he should have seen his way across the Atlantic, to—to send for her. Fortunately, the day he withdrew himself from his home, Mrs. Clear was gone with a party to the London Docks. He had merely told her, that for a few days he should be absent in the country.

It was about a fortnight after this separation, that the fast-sailing ship, "The Good Intent," lay off Spithead: all was prepared; in a few minutes she would put out to sea. A boat approached the ship, containing a passenger, a Mr. Bustard, whose berth had been duly selected and paid for by a friend in the London Docks. The voyager mounted the side; but, no sooner was he upon deck, than a shriek—a piercing female screech—thrilled the very timbers of "The Good Intent." The men paused motionless at the ropes; the passengers stared, transfixed; but what was the surprise—the indignation of all on board—when a woman rushed to the new-comer, fell "like a guilty thing" at his feet, and with clasped hands, running eyes, and cracking voice, exclaimed—

"Forgive me, Matthew!—pray, forgive me! I don't deserve

that you should have followed me! Indeed, I don't! But, forgive me, my only Clear—and I will—I will go back with you!"

Reader, it was even so. Peter Bustard, cabin passenger, was no other than the defaulter, Matthew Clear. And most unluckily, two individuals—their boat lay astern—expressly commissioned to search "The Good Intent" or any other vessel, for the fugitive, convinced by the words of Julia that they had caught their prey, instantly pounced upon it, and having satisfied Captain Rogers of the legality of the act, proceeded to carry Matthew and his luggage into their private bark. Indeed, Captain Rogers, though evidently interested in the fate of Matthew—was too wise an officer—too good a seaman—to question lawful authority. Otherwise, he had never risen from the rank of captain of the main-top to the command of his present ship; for, by the strangest accident in life, Mrs. Clear, when a spinster, had sailed to England with the very Rogers, in whose "Good Intent" she was now a favoured passenger.

Matthew was hurried into the boat; his wife, breathless with anxiety, watched him safely seated between the officers. Of course, she expected an invitation to join the party; but Matthew deigned no look, no word to the forsaken. Her magnanimity at the spousal neglect was truly beautiful. She descended to the cabin with the dignity of an injured empress; and from the stern window, with a bottle of hartshorn at her nose, contemplated the "lessening boat."

For two or three minutes a deep silence reigned throughout the ship; and the very sea, the breeze, seemed hushed in sympathy with the silent sorrow, the wrongs of Matthew. All, save the oars, was profoundly at rest, when a high, shrill note came over the waters from "The Good Intent,"—a sound driven "like a sword of fire" into the ears of Matthew—a voice that cried through the serene air—across the glassy wave—

"Ha! ha! ha! Hooked him, by ——!"

It was not to be supposed that Mrs. Clear could cross the Atlantic without Nabob. Like the sweet little cherub, the parrot was aloft, perched on a rope of the departing vessel.

CHAPTER V.

Law and private malice did their worst; and Matthew grew old and lived a beggar. It is true, in the fondness of his heart he would continue to see his way; but then he looked through rags, and the world had lost its glory. He was open to any offer; but fortune only sneered at his readiness. In the humility of his soul he thought nothing upon this dirty earth too foul to touch, and yet he walked with empty hands. Alone in the world—for he possessed certain evidence of the demise of Mrs. Clear at Philadelphia—he had little to live for, but found it difficult to live. Often, seeing his way, he looked directly at the poor-house. And what added scorpions to his daily wants, was the prosperity of early acquaintances—of men with no more eyes than moles; men, who in truth had never seen their way, and who, notwithstanding, had jogged dully and prosperously on. Harassed, disgusted, weary of breath, Matthew paused in a desolate hour at a book-stall; and, thumbing over a volume of Plutarch, nerved by heroic examples, he resolved on self-slaughter.

Behold Matthew, with but one sixpence—and that begged from an old acquaintance—in his pocket; houseless—hopeless; his coat in tatters; a ventilating rent in his breeches; melancholy eating his heart; a November sky—a November rain; and a hole in either shoe! Is not this an hour in which a man could lie down in a coffin as in a bed? In which he could gather himself to sleep—wrap even a parish shroud about him as he would wrap a warm great coat—compose his arms upon his breast, and then fall smiling off into death—smiling at the running, scraping, stamping, shuffling, still to continue over his head, by the lackeys, the flatterers, the debaters, the jugglers of the world above? So thought Matthew! Thus saw he his way into the grave, and looking back at what he had to leave, the wormy pit seemed to him a warm, comfortable couch; eider-down at the bottom, and silken curtains at the sides.

Matthew, pondering the means, decided in favour of arsenic. Composing himself to a look of indifference, he entered the handsome shop of an apothecary. "What may you want?"—

Matthew paused, and a tremor thrilled him from crown to sole. "What may you want?"

"A—a—a dose of salts," answered Matthew. The salts were

delivered, the money paid, and Matthew was again in the street. The reader may marvel at the vacillation of the self-doomed, who, seeking deadly poison, asks for a salutary aperient. We not know whether we can satisfactorily solve the riddle : but this we know; that Matthew, casting up his eyes, beheld in the prosperous apothecary, the helpless, and, as he afterwards turned out, the ungrateful, arrogant Tippoo ; the boy, whom —held to his pledge by Mrs. Clear — Matthew had "fostered and educated as a gentleman, and provided for in this stormy, wicked life." Meeting his looks, Matthew thought he was recognised; and whether—for pride is a mysterious agent—he would not suffer Tippoo to suspect that his foster-father was so abased that nought was left him but to die, or whether Matthew had really repented of his wickedness, we cannot decide. We can only assure the reader that, eschewing poison, he asked for salts ; and the medicine, in his possession, he was too good an economist to fling it away. No, he swallowed it ; and, strange to relate, in four-and-twenty hours, he saw his way with very different eyes. Thus, salts may be fatal to romance.

Matthew drudged and drudged, and sank and sank. He, who, on the outset of life, saw his way over its proudest heights, its richest plains, now, with contracted vision, hung over the books of a sordid master, a withered usurer. However, as the miser was much older than Matthew, as he had no kindred, and was bountiful in his professions towards his sole, his confidential, and his half-starved clerk, Matthew, in bright moments, would see his way to the muckworm's fortune. Hence, was he all devotion and ductility. Thus, when his master testified to any circumstance, it was all-sufficient for Matthew : though he himself should have forgotten the matter, yet was his confidence so great in the veracity of his employer, that he had no hesitation in swearing to it. A law-suit illustrated the fidelity of Matthew.

A certain spendthrift deeply indebted to the advances of the money-merchant, had the dishonourable audacity to contest the claims of the lender. The suit was involved in many niceties ; and what was worse, it fell at a time when Matthew's master was in the hands of the physician, who, to the anxious inquiries of the clerk, shook a death's head. The pain of the sick man's disease only aggravated his desire of vengeance. To Matthew he left the evidence of the case, narrating various incidents which, described upon what Matthew believed to be a bed of death, had to him all the force and solemnity of an oath. Matthew swore in open court in the spirit of his master ; but vain was the testimony ; the spendthrift gained the cause ; and the sudden shock finished the usurer. He died, leaving everything he had for the erection

of a chapel, bequeathing not even a blessing to his clerk. Hapless Matthew! It was not enough for the defendant to gain a victory, but he must persecute the conquered. An indictment was filed against the clerk for perjury. He was tried, found guilty, and sentenced; and for only swearing in the spirit of his master, Matthew was condemned to pass two years in Newgate, and to stand one hour by St. Sepulchre's clock in the pillory!

Poor Matthew! They who saw him fixed and turning, avow to his credit, that he went round and round with the calmness and equanimity of the most practised statesman.

All was breathless, hushed, in the Old Bailey, as Matthew was presented to the mob. The executioner acquitted himself with praiseworthy adroitness. In an instant Matthew was ready for the sport; and still the silence reigned, as he stood, prepared for the first turn.

"Ha! ha! ha! Hooked him, by ——!" rang from a window of the governor's mansion. Yes, there was the ubiquitous Nabob! He had been brought to Newgate by a sailor, subsequently doomed to the hulks; had been trafficked with a turnkey's wife for tobacco, and, after various prison vicissitudes, was promoted to the drawing-room of the governor.

Nothing could exceed the humanity of the crowd. Two or three moralised on the condition of the culprit; but, with a single exception, no spectator offered an affront. Having turned his hour, Matthew was about to be released.

"How are you now?" inquired the executioner.

"Pretty well—pretty well—if"—

At this moment, a dastard in the human form flung a handful of mire in the eyes of the sufferer; who, trying to shake it off, merely added—

"If—if—I—could—see—my—way!"

A kind Samaritan attended Matthew in the prison. He sought to clear the eyes of the sufferer of certain particles. "Look straight forward," said the operator.

"Ha!" groaned Matthew, and he thought, "if I had always looked straightforward, how very, very differently should I have seen my way!"

JOHN APPLEJOHN:

THE MAN WHO "MEANT WELL."

CHAPTER I.

COURAGE, reader; we have entered Chancery Lane. Behold a gentleman in glossy black, with pale and contemplative face; with half-closed lids, and eyes, hare-like, thrown back: he glances at an opposite arch, the entrance to a solemn Hall, where nothing is heard save notes of sweetest sound—justice tinkling her golden scales! The arch to common eyes is built of coarsest stone. It is a piece of purest ivory, worthy to frame the looking-glass of truth; whose silver-voiced sons pass rustling in and out, arrayed in her sable garb—for truth, a milk-white virgin in the sky, became an Ethiop when she touched the earth; albeit that these her children oftimes deny the change, vowing her blackest black to be the whitest white. And in and out these goodly creatures pass,—wisdom on their brows, hope in their eyes, and peace and love upon their lips. Their awful heads bear curled treasures, snatched from the manes and tails of steeds of Araby, whitened with powdered pearls which Venus' self might weep for. The phœnix might nestle in one of these—by the profane illiterate denominated wigs — deeming it his chosen spicery!

And see that loitering band of middle-aged and venerable men. What a halo of benevolence surrounds each head and glistens on each face! With a wise contempt of outward show, they are clad in threadbare raiments; yes, though able to appear in purple and fine linen, they meekly choose to stand in faded black and amber-coloured cotton. And yet these practical philanthropists will, in the kindest spirit of intelligence, speak of their abounding wealth: nay, to serve their fellow-creatures, they have been known to swear to it. They have made oath to their possessions

—wealth in bonds, and granaries heaped with yellow corn; and this, when the reckless vulgar have called them—men of straw!

A little onward, and we halt at the simple dwelling of the sober scrivener. Old Egypt, with her paragraphs of pictures, comes upon us, as we contemplate the labouring scribes. How wise the craft, how profound the mystery! Look at the ample skin; with what occult wisdom is it overwrought! How thickly is the true meaning shrouded from the common brain, perplexed and reeling at the cunning of the art! Grope manfully through the labyrinth of words, and though you are but a vulgar man, you will apprehend the sense as easily as would the eyeless Samson. Is not the device most exquisite? Is not this cobweb writing most admirable? But ere you hope to seize its purport in its pure simplicity, first learn to tell us what language speaks the painted dog of Cheops?—what his cat?—what the ibis?—and what the mystic crocodile? Even the stamped lion and unicorn at the margin of the deed, with their open, ingenuous faces, seem to wonder at the mystery they are called upon to make valid and to dignify.

Not so fast: tarry and consider these goodly rows of tomes, in coats of leather made sacred to the law. Do you not feel a sudden bowing of the spirit—an awe, as if the sages of long-departed time rose silently as vapours from their tombs, and stared upon you? Ponder on the mighty brains conserved in the leaves before you. Marvel at the untiring spirit that hath painted right and wrong, and both in colours softening delicately down, that where the separate hues begin or end, it asks some fifty spirits more to tell. Musing on the books, our fancy changes them to different things: now, they are pieces of pure crystal—now, wedges of thrice-assayed gold—now, pots of honey for the hungering—medicine for the sick. Here, the stricken stranger, bleeding with his wrongs, may pause and read his glorious remedy. Here, the wan widow gathers hope for her just cause—and here, the orphan dries her sorrow, comforted by strong assertion. And here, the man, hurt by some neighbour's tongue, may learn if he be surely hurt or not. Survey the shelves: they bend with the weight of grave opinions; and learn this further good, that to a single point there run a hundred opposite lines. Look again: the place is thronged with forms. We are led back to the days of the first Henry—of that foolish bully, John—of pious Edward. And there are the forest laws; and with a thought, we have the villain driving his swine to the beech trees, the immortal man but little raised above his grunting charge: we see the sport of nobles, and the pain of serfs, and we sigh for the days of the picturesque when the life of a man was of no

more account than the life of a deer. Talk of vendors of romance! Give us the window of a law-bookseller for the bloody tales of iron life. See, there—"State Trials" in a massive row: the books are gone—but there is an array of faces! Time, the great cleanser, has been there at work. There, the miserable man of lies, his ears clipped to the skull, is a preacher of truth; and there, the leprous traitor loses his scales, and smiles on passing generations a bright-faced martyr!

Turn we from the houses, to the passengers and loiterers at doors. Look at that slim, short, young man, at the end of an alley; his eyes rolling and twinkling in their sockets, as though he feared a tiger was at hand, but where he knew not. He stands but a few paces from his own sweet home, like a spider advanced upon its web. His face shows him to be a descendant of the patriarchs; it has an anxious though not a melancholy beauty: he has a mildly drooping lip and the eye of a moulting hawk. No man has watched some of his fellow-creatures with greater zeal; and if the labour has deepened his spirit, it has also sharpened it. There, again, is a man of a quite different mark: his acute study of the law, his intimate knowledge of its green winding alleys and its mossy nooks, has repaid him with advantages he cares not to conceal: witness the sapphire, larger than a beetle, brightening in his breast; his fingers ringed to the joint with flashing gems; his chain of gold swinging in massive loop at his velvet vest.

And there are two or three of the humbler priesthood—the working clergy in the cause of right; the toiling souls who bear the insignia and the types of law; who do "personal service" to a thousand men, and think but little of the act. And there is the portly broker—the smooth-faced sworn functionary; he with universal judgment, who—on the sanctity of his oath—philosophically and arithmetically proves the worth of all things.

Shall we proceed? It is a hot June evening, and the pent air burns and stifles like the heat of an oven.

Stay; who have we seated on this step,—his elbow on his knee, his face in his hand? Who is he, that on a sultry night in June sits on the step of a house—one of the dozen places of ease to the larger gaols? Who is he—who can he be?

Reader,—he is John Applejohn; a simple soul of good dispositions,—a man who "means well."

CHAPTER II.

"I AM very sorry, Mr. Applejohn — very sorry, indeed; but you must know I am a father and"—

"To be sure," said John, "or how could I marry Sarah?" And our hero looked innocently into the face of a tall, big man, rustic in his dress and manner, who now tapped his leather gaiter with a stick, and now scrambled his fingers through his thin grey hair, and now coughed, and tried to put a resolute look into his broad, healthy, unthinking countenance, which in its general expression might have typified the strength and hearty virtues of that worthiest of knights, good Sir John Barleycorn.

"I am very sorry for you indeed, John—Mr. Applejohn,"—and the sorrowful speaker passed the wide cuff of his drab coat round his hat and fell into deeper melancholy.

"Why, master Twopenny"—and John stared, and his mouth widened and grew rigid, and his blood sank from his face as he spoke—"no, no—there 's no harm come to Sarah? No!—Sarah 's well?"

"As well as you 'll let her be," said Twopenny.

"As well as I 'll let her be—I?" cried John in amazement—"but come in—come in, master Twopenny," and John fluttered into a small room, and Twopenny, sighing, and slowly rubbing his cheek, heavily followed.

"And now, about Sarah?" cried John as he dropt into a chair.

"All 's well," said old Twopenny, leaning on his stick, and lowering himself into his seat.

"Mr. John Applejohn," said the abrupt Twopenny, "what do you think of brandy?"

"To be sure, directly," said the alert John, about to quit the parlour, when his arm was vigorously grasped by the farmer, who shook his head, and cried louder and louder—"Not a drop—not a drop—not a drop," accompanying the last three words with an action of the wrist that brought John once more into his chair.

"Why, what is the matter?" cried the bewildered John.

Twopenny, drawing a long sigh, said—"I 'm very sorry, Mr. Applejohn,—very sorry; but you must know that I am a father, and"—

"To be sure you are; well?"—

"And the happiness of Sarah isn't to be thrown away." You 'll allow that?"

"Certainly: thrown away!" cried Applejohn shuddering at the very thought.

"I always thought well of you, Mr. Applejohn"—John bowed thankfully—"I thought you a moral young man, and more than that, a good workman; if you did but know your own worth, Mr. Applejohn! No man's name stands higher for buckskins—there doesn't," and the old farmer solemnised his assertion by savagely slapping his own leg—"no, there doesn't! And yet, what are good gifts, if folks will cast 'em away?"

Now it seemed to John that the old man had drunk himself through all the grades of intoxication, arriving at that dreary point where maudlin ensues.

"No, Mr. Applejohn, I couldn't ha' thought it; I 'd never ha' believed you was born to drink."

"What shall I do with him?" thought John.

"It 's worse than the black art when it fastens on a man."

"True, master Twopenny—very true," cried John, humouring the old man whom he thought fast sinking into insensibility, though in truth he was every moment becoming more soberly pathetic. "True, master Twopenny,—and yet a little—little drink,"—

"A little drink! Tell me this, John Applejohn—tell me this," and Twopenny brought his chair back, and with his broad fingers patting John's wrist, looked into the young man's simple face, and asked in a voice of subdued earnestness, "John Applejohn, did you ever see a pumpkin in a bottle?"

John paused ere he replied. Yes!—he believed he had seen some such phenomenon.

"And do you know how it got there?" John shook his head. "You don't know how it got there?" cried Twopenny—"I 'll tell ye;" and Twopenny leaned over to the ear of John, and took it upon his own sagacity to say—"they put the pumpkin in when it was little." Saying which, the farmer drew back, anxiously awaiting the effect of the intelligence upon John; who, we presume, was not altogether astonished by the published secret, for he stroked his chin, and calmly remarked—"Indeed?" On this, Mr. Twopenny slowly rose to his full height.

"Well, Mr. Applejohn, then I 've nothing more to say—you know my mind?"

"He is very drunk," thought John.

"Now, we understand one another," said Twopenny.

"Not quite," said John meekly.

"No! why, this it is then; a man"—and the farmer spoke with great solemnity—"a man is a pumpkin."

"Excessively drunk," thought John.

"He begins to drink little by little—but the thing grows and grows, until at last, he cannot free himself—he can't get out,—he can't get out, John," cried the farmer in a tone of reproach.

"Very true," said Applejohn, dimly apprehending the moral application.

"And so I am come to the religious determination that you shall never marry my Sally," said the stern Twopenny.

John had scarcely breath sufficient to ask, "why not?"

"Because," cried the farmer with a searching glance—"because, you are found out."

"Found out?" gasped Applejohn.

"Found out!" repeated Twopenny. "You sha'n't have Sally; for I 'm determined, when she takes a husband, she sha'n't marry a pumpkin in a bottle." The farmer said no more; three strides took him into the street. John, as if stunned by a blow followed to the door, and staring after his visitor, remarked to himself—"How very well he walks—and yet, how very drunk!" Now, farmer Twopenny was sober as a Hindoo.

CHAPTER III.

THREE days had passed, and every morning John Applejohn had leaned, with a beating heart, at his door-post. The fourth morning, and the letter came. And John reads, and as he reads, we are sure the fiends rejoice.—

"MY DEAR JOHN,—Did I ever think I should live to see this day! It is better that I should have died—much better that I had never been born! My father makes me write this, and though I mean every word I write, my heart bleeds at every syllable. It is in vain they tell me that I ought to thank heaven for my escape; I have tried to do so; but I can't—and yet I feel it very wicked not to be grateful. Oh, John! could I have thought it of you! though I tremble to think of your deceit. You, who always seemed so sober—and now to be found out! But I won't upbraid you, John, although my heart is breaking. I have said all I could for you to my father, but he is harder than any flint against you. For your own sake, John, leave off this dreadful habit: think what it must lead to—and shun liquor more than you would shun a fever; for that only hurts the body—drink kills a good name. When I think of you as I first saw you—and think what this wicked course will make of you—how it will leave you without friends, without health—a

jeer for the world, and a burthen to yourself, I could—for all my father says—cry myself blind to save you. Do, John, pray do, step back from the pit that is open at your foot; and do not forget that although you and I—my father makes me write it, has made me promise it—although you and I must never meet again, you will never cease to be remembered by—SARAH."

(A few words added as a postscript had been carefully marked out.)

John looked up from the letter with gaping mouth and an unconscious stare: it *was* paper, real paper that he held—and, yes, the hand was the hand of Sarah!

"Good morning, Mr. Applejohn." The greeting was repeated, ere John was conscious of the presence of a visitor, who, having thrice knocked without an invitation to enter, had opened the door. "Good morning,—eh?—not very well,"—observed the considerate stranger.

"A—a sick headache," said John.

"Have you tried nothing?" asked Warp. John was silent. "Then take my advice. I was young myself once, Mr. Applejohn, and know what a little attack of the sort is—take my advice; try my remedy: you have nothing to do but to take a hair of the dog that bit you."

"A dog! bit me! why,—what dog?" asked John, staring at his adviser.

"Why,—he! he!—hav'n't you heard the saying?"—(the hypocrite! he must have heard it, judged Warp)—"he! he! a hair of the dog that bit you. That is, if a great deal of brandy did the mischief last night, a little drop of the same may bring about a cure this morning. I advise you as I would advise my own child, if I had one."

"No doubt, Mr. Warp—but—you see, you have mistaken my illness—I never drink, never—and now, in a short word, Mr. Warp, what is your business?"

"My business is from the firm. I am desired to say that, in consequence of matters to which it would, perhaps, be indelicate in me to more particularly allude, our house cannot suffer you to open an account."

"Very well, Mr. Warp; I suppose there are other houses," said John, with great resignation.

"True, Mr. Applejohn; very true; but character flies, sir; yes, sir, character has wings; and, of course, the lighter it is, the quicker it goes."

"Character! why, does anybody dare?"—asked John, his eyes flashing—"does anybody dare?"—

Warp shook his head, and smiled cynically: "You mus'n't

talk in that manner: you're a young tradesman with no capital, and everybody dares. It may be all very well for men established; but it doesn't answer for young beginners: at all events, if they must do these things, they should have a proper respect for their own interests, and do them snugly, and in private."

"What things?—what do you mean?" exclaimed John.

"I am not one of those men who have no kindness for my fellow-creatures; no, no, I have seen too much of life. And perhaps it isn't right to get drunk; perhaps not; but it is very wrong indeed in a young man with his way to make, to let the world know it."

"Drunk! you can't mean me, Mr. Warp? Nobody ever saw"—

"We do such things in that state, we don't know who sees."

"But what is all this to me?" cried John.

"What to you? Oh, Mr. Applejohn!"—said Warp, with something like pathos,—"for a young beginner to be known to drink is utter ruin not only with his clothier but his customer. I don't blame you for getting drunk, Applejohn—upon my soul I don't,"—and Warp spoke with impressive benevolence,—"but I must and do condemn you for sitting down and exposing your drunkenness in the open street. You don't know who saw you—indeed you don't," and Warp quitted the house. He walked at a quick pace down the street; and suddenly pausing at a corner, looked vigilantly about him. He then rapidly passed a threshold, above which an enormous bunch of grapes glittering in the sun, typified the *aurum potabile* to be had within.

"You don't know who saw you!" These words rang in the ears of Applejohn. It was plain some mortal enemy had been at work! John Applejohn a drunkard, when the naiad of the stream was no more temperate than he! Oh, it was some foolish trick passed upon him—and yet, Sarah to join in it! No: it was clear enough; some wicked, spiteful wretch—perhaps, a rival—had vowed his ruin; and this was the cruel slander raised to crush him. However, he would not be destroyed without an attempt to clear the matter up; he would trace the villainy to its spring-head, and punish the cowardly delinquents. He had already grown strong in the resolution, and was about to quit the house on the sacred errand, when he was encountered at the door by his landlord.

"Could I say a few words with you, Mr. Applejohn?" asked the man.

"Just a few; for I 'm in a great hurry," answered John.

"I won't keep you a minute," said the landlord, and immediately proceeded to open the business. "I've been thinking,

Mr. Applejohn," he observed very considerately, "that, perhaps, as you are only just setting up, you 'll find this house too heavy for you."

"I hope not," said John.

"I am sure, I should be very sorry to be in any way the innocent cause of hampering a young man beginning the world,"—

"You are very good, Mr. Pantile—very good," remarked his grateful tenant.

"And though, for the house itself, the rent is very little; still, as I told you, in this parish the rates are very heavy."

"Light—very light—next to nothing, you said, Mr. Pantile."

"Never could have said that—never could. However, that doesn't signify. What I am come to say is this: if you have any misgivings about your prospects—and as I wouldn't stand in a young man's light—I—yes, I 'll tell you what I 've made up my mind to do: I 'll take the lease off your hands, and all I 'll ask of you is the rent for the present quarter." And as Mr. Pantile said this, he looked at John as placidly as a fox looks at a goose. "Don't think, Mr. Applejohn, that I am led away by what folks say of you—no, no; when I was as young as you I had my fling: I led a life of pleasure—I may say, I was quite a rhapsodist"—(it was not very clear to Mr. Pantile, what he meant by the word,)—"quite a rhapsodist; and therefore, if you think the house too big for you—and though I speak against my own interest, I think it is—I—at a word, I 'll take it back again."

"You are very good, Mr. Pantile—very good—but I shall keep the house,—and as for what my enemies say against me—and, if I must say it, a man who can fine-draw as I can, can't expect to be without enemies,"—

"You know best," said the landlord, "but as I have received a letter from Mr. Twopenny, telling me that you shall not have his daughter, and therefore not the three hundred pounds,"—

"And has Mr. Twopenny written as much to you?" asked John tremblingly.

"And who can blame him? I used to get tipsy once, for as I said, I was once a rhapsodist—but you know, Mr. Applejohn, excuse ourselves as we may, if we will only think as a father, we can't blame any man for keeping his daughter safe from a drunkard." And Mr. Pantile departed.

Here was another blow, and again John sat irresolute and astounded. Like Ugolino, he sat staring at the wall; when the

pastry-cook's boy entered with a parcel. "Shall I put it on the table, sir?" John started, and stammered "yes;" and the little boy deposited his burthen close to the arm of the absorbed Applejohn, and went away. John, heaving his deepest sigh, let fall his hand upon the parcel: that parcel was his wedding-cake —his superfluous wedding-cake.

CHAPTER IV.

We will spare the reader a recital of the many attempts made by John upon the obduracy of the farmer. John had thought himself within a few fleet days of marriage. His house was in order—his credit good—his name unspotted; and lo! at a breath he had lost his bride—his credit—and his name. It was in vain that John asked to be confronted with his accusers,—the assassins of his reputation. No, no; farmer Twopenny was satisfied, and further appeal was unnecessary. Nor was John more successful in his address to the employers of Mr. Warp; they had nothing to say to Mr. Applejohn; or merely this—they begged to decline his orders except for ready money. For three whole nights did John lie wide awake, reviewing every deed of his past life. He could only arrive at one conclusion—a dreary one it was,—that some profligate wretch, like to himself as pin is like to pin, was reeling drunkenly about the town, and he, the innocent John Applejohn, was doomed to bear the punishment due to the bacchanal! And with this comfortable thought John would fall asleep. Alas! his waking misery still haunted him. Now, he would be hunted for picking pockets, the real thief—his fatal similitude—safely off with the booty: now, he was to be hung for sheep-stealing, and there in the crowd, was the guilty rascal grinning and making faces at him. At last, all his troubles were over, and he was married to his beloved Sarah: he goes to his happy home at eleven at night, and knocking at his door, is told from the window to call to-morrow, as Mr. John Applejohn has been in bed these two hours! Such were the visions that wore our hero by night, and gave him the look of a spectre all the day. However, as yet John had only taken the first step in infamy. Though almost a confirmed water-drinker, he was nevertheless judged an irreclaimable drunkard. He surrendered his house to Mr. Pantile, who, rhapsodist as he deemed himself, cancelled

the lease ; the no less willingly that he had previously had a higher bidder for the article.

Thus fortune turned away from John, and he stood alone with nothing but his poverty, and a thousand imperfections. And yet John, though bleeding inwardly with undeserved injuries, looked upon men and loved them : yes, there was no man, woman, or child, to whom he did not mean well. A rigid anatomist might question the fact, but we are convinced that John's heart was his whole body.

" The Bottle of Hay " was, at the time of our story, a noted sanctuary for unemployed tailors. There, about three months after his rejection by Sarah, was to be found the pennyless Applejohn. The nights were growing long and chill, and the parlour fire of Mrs. Shorts, the lone and portly landlady, meekly imitated the beneficence of the impartial sun, for it dispensed its light and warmth gratis to the destitute tailor. And there the keen-eyed might behold through clouds of circumambient smoke, the pensive John fixed in a corner, his blood now simmering with martial heat, listening to a martial song, in which the singer with a note of gratifying confidence, assured the listener that any number of French was considerably less than one true Briton,—and that to expire covered over with wounds was the only really desirable way of going out of this sublunar world. Then would John think of a distant country, and of that soft delicious bed, with death the maker—the bed of glory. A brief five minutes, and the stern desire for cutting throats would pass ; a second singer, with a voice like that of a cuckoo, breathing " Cherry Ripe," and, with the magic sound, carrying back our tailor through the orchards of Kent to the house of Sarah.

" Mr. Scarlet, what may be your real opinion of the present state of the land force ? " Such was the comprehensive question put by an inquiring visitor at the " Bottle of Hay," to a sometime tenant of that commodious hostelry.

" Shameful," replied Mr. Scarlet, with the manner of a man who has long since made up his mind upon a subject. " But what are we to expect from the present ministry ? What do they care for the honour of the country ? Ha ! if we had real statesmen in office, there 'd been war these six months. Yes ; by this time we might have lost a thousand troops. Shameful," repeated Mr. Scarlet.

" A shocking sacrifice of blood," remarked a philanthropist.

" Blood, sir ? What is blood ? Think of glory, sir," said Mr. Scarlet. " But we stand disgraced in the eyes of the world, when a few battles, if we had got nothing by them, would at

least have kept up our character. And then for our fine young gentlemen,—why isn't it dreadful for a man as loves his country, to see 'em—poor fellows !—put to the shifts they are, to get rid of time, when the trouble might be taken off their hands in a minute ? And yet people talk of the blessings of peace ! Why, peace isn't the natural state of man."

"Mr. Scarlet"—it was the waiter, with his head in at the door, who spoke—"Mr. Scarlet, your wife has sent your little girl over to say, that if you don't come home, she 'll come and fetch you."

"Peace isn't the natural state of man," repeated Scarlet, who we think had not heard the threat of his wife, pronounced through the waiter.—"No ; it isn't," and hastily finishing his liquor, he quitted the parlour.

"He knows the true interests of the country," said a sartorial smoker : "yes, he knows the value of war."

"To be sure he does," remarked another—"he 's an army tailor."

And with such sweet discourse, the hours were passed in the parlour of "the Bottle of Hay," until time and Bill, the boy, called the tailors to bed. In a long narrow room, at the top of the house, Mrs. Shorts had benevolently caused to be disposed twenty couches—each couch, if the parties made themselves small, and were mutually accommodating,—capable of holding, if not containing, two sleepers. When trade was very bad, there might be seen sleeping in the house of Mrs. Shorts, forty horizontal tailors—yes, in "the Bottle of Hay," full two score unemployed needles.

John had retired to bed ; tailor by tailor came in, and each and all having less sorrow, or more liquor than John, soon gave loudest evidence of perfect rest. Triton with his horn had not been heard among that sleeping band. The clock of the neighbouring church struck one : at the very moment, the door opened, and John saw Mrs. Shorts in a voluminous nightcap, and a lighted candle in her hand, walk as softly as her weight would permit her, into the dormitory. She was followed by a man almost as big as herself. "Another of the unemployed," thought John, as he now eyed what he believed to be a journeyman tailor, pretty far gone in his thread of life. The man wore a close drab-coat, buttoned to the chin : an oil-skin travelling-cap and a red handkerchief pulled over his head, and tied up to his nose, tantalised the curious spectator with a very imperfect view of the face of the stranger. Mrs. Shorts and the new-comer moved slowly up the room ; the landlady so shadowing the light with her right hand that its rays might come tempered to the countenances of the sleepers, showing them all unconscious to

the inquisitive new comer. "A constable, no doubt," thought John—"some robbery,"—and then the causes of his late ill-luck fell forcibly upon him, and in his terrified imagination, he pictured the officers of the peace in search of him, the guilty likeness of the real thief. John closed his eye-lids, and heard the visitors approach his pallet. Suddenly, they stopt; and John, in sudden perspiration, awaited the arousing hand of the stranger. There was a pause, and John lay voiceless with apprehension.

"You 'll cut me off dis fellow," growled the man in the oil-skin cap.

John opened his eyes and saw the back of the mysterious speaker, slowly moving towards the door, the landlady with the light preceding. "You 'll cut me off this fellow," continued to ring through the brain of John. Twice in his sleep—for sleep came to him at length—did John suffer decapitation: once by the Christian axe, and once by the heathen scimitar.

CHAPTER V.

"Mr. Applejohn, if you 'll go to Mr. Zweifler's, there 's work for you." Such was the grateful intelligence conveyed, at breakfast time, to John by Bill, the boy; and in less than twenty minutes, our unemployed hero stood in the presence of Karl Zweifler, a German by birth, a tailor by trade, and a benevolent brute by disposition. Whether the scepticism had been brought upon him by a succession of bad debts, or whether Mr. Zweifler was a born doubter, we attempt not to decide; certain it is, that though compelled by the hard destiny of business, to give credit, he had really no faith in any man. He looked upon all the world as a brotherhood of villains sworn and linked together to cheat one tailor, and that defenceless animal to be—Karl Zweifler.

"I am come, sir, hearing that you wanted a workman," said John, and he had scarcely spoken ere he felt himself grow cold beneath the light blue eyes of the old man; the nocturnal visitor of the bed-room. "I am come, sir," John repeated, and then stopped.

"Teeves—teeves—all teeves"—said Zweifler. "Ha!—well—dere 's de oder villains,"—and pointing to a staircase, John followed the direction of the finger, and found himself among a circle of his peers. John was ignorant of the grateful truth, but

he really owed his present place to the ingenuousness of his countenance. It was the custom of Mr. Zweifler, when in want of mercenaries, to visit "The Bottle of Hay" in the middle of the night; and at that solemn time to select from the sleepers—the selection always suggested by the expression on the face of the sleeping—the required member or members. Hence, when Zweifler, pausing at the bed of John Applejohn, said, in professional phrase, to Mrs. Shorts,—"You 'll cut me off this fellow," he merely implied, "you 'll send this man to me to-morrow morning." We beseech the reader not to dismiss this whim as a puerile invention on our part; by so doing, he would commit great injustice towards Karl Zweifler, who always defended what seemed to more superficial tailors an eccentricity, on the ground that "no rogue ever looked so much a rogue as when he was asleep."

John Applejohn continued to sew and reap in the house of the master tailor; and already six months had elapsed, when John stood, in the opinion of his employer, not altogether so atrocious a villain as when he first entered his service. It was a long time, however, ere Zweifler ceased to attribute the rigid industry of John on Mondays to some deep-laid scheme of deception; some unheard-of plan of infamy. The attention and sobriety of his journeyman somewhat irritated the old tradesman, as they seemed to insult his theory of the iniquity of all mankind and of tailors in particular. "The devil is not so black as he 's painted," observed the homely John Applejohn in reply to the uncharitable creed of Zweifler, one Monday more than usually satirical on his laborious servant; and the manner of John more than the matter of the proverb struck the misanthrope; for, with new-born benevolence, he rubbed the tips of his fingers under his black velvet skull-cap, and twinkling his light blue eyes, he said with a faint smile—"Not so black? Well—well—berhaps not: berhaps, after all, de deyvil is a piebalt."

It was Monday, and John sat alone upon the board. He was employed on the last button-hole of a new black coat—the livery of woe for Benjamin Gruelthorpe, Esq.; son and heir of Emanuel Gruelthorpe, deceased. John glanced from his work, and saw old Zweifler looking seriously on. The old tailor knit his brows at the garment—shook his head—and groaned through his teeth.

"Nothing the matter with the coat, sir?" asked John, deferentially.

"No, no; goot poy—goot poy: de oder teeves are at nine-pins, but you are goot poy," and never before had Zweifler so unequivocally praised the industry of his now solitary workman.

"Why, sir, the funeral takes place this afternoon,"—said John.

"Ha! ha! What music it will pe, when de cold clay goes tumblin' on de old man's coffin!" and Zweifler laughed bitterly.

"Mr. Gruelthorpe has died very rich?" said John, inquiringly. "His son—"

"Son!" cried Zweifler, and he approached still nearer to his journeyman, and with subdued voice and moistened eyes, said—"John Applejohn, do you know what a son is?" and then without waiting for a reply, went on—"I will tell you, John Applejohn—I will tell you, what it is to have a son. It is to hear an angel at your ear at his first leetle cry: it is to feel an angel at your breast de first time to put him dere: it is to have your heart every day grow pig and pig, and your eye to have better light to hear his tongue—to see his leetle steps! It is—it is—but—but you want some silk, John,"—and the old man, his eyes gushing tears, turned rapidly up the room, John pausing at his undrawn needle in silent wonder. In a few minutes, the old tailor, with a composed face and dry eyes returned, and threw to John the unnecessary skein of silk. There was a pause of some minutes; at length, John ventured to observe—"I understand, sir, that Mr. Gruelthorpe's funeral will be very fine?"

"Very—very fine," said Zweifler, "why not—why not?"

"I 'm told the grave is to be twelve feet deep," remarked John.

"Deeper, deeper," replied the old man, earnestly. "All such graves are."

"Such graves?" and John looked up.

"Dere is a story in my country about 'em, John. While you press de coat, I 'll tell it you, John—I 'll tell it you."

"Is it true, sir?" asked Applejohn.

"As heaven," answered old Zweifler; and John worked and listened to the tale we are about to narrate, omitting the peculiarities of the old German.

"Hans Pfennig," said the old tailor, "lived in the little town of Cuxhaven. He had been a merchant in his younger time, and had returned from a far land to die in his first home. He was so old, no man remembered him a child: he lived, solitary as a raven—and like a raven, was shunned as a thing of evil omen. He was known to have the wealth of a king, and yet he wore the rags and ate the scraps of a beggar. He was a man to make men shudder as they looked upon him—mothers would catch their children up from his path, and flee away with them as from a fasting wolf: and so he lived, with the hate of his neighbours breathing upon him. Days, and weeks, and months passed, and no man had seen Hans Pfennig. The priest and some of the townsfolk bent their way to the lonely hovel of the miser. There they paused, and looked in the face of one another; for the door

of the hut was closed, and long grass waved before it. The door, by the order of the priest, was broken in ; and Hans Pfennig was found, seated in his chair, dead and withered. The hut was ransacked, and oh ! the gold and jewels raked into the light of day. The shed stood upon a mine of buried wealth. Well,—a distant heir was found ; and the bell was tolled, and the grave was dug for Hans Pfennig. The day of burial came ; and if the dead might be made to move, the body of Hans Pfennig had sat up in its coffin, tortured back to life by the gold bestowed upon its dust. The bearers brought the body to the grave : the coffin was slung within the ropes, and every eye was bent upon the bier descending to the bottom. The ropes were found too short ; and staringly, but silently, the diggers tied more rope to either end ; they lowered and lowered, and again the rope was out. 'More rope,' cried the grey-haired sexton, and shook his palsied hands ; and the people at the grave stood, as if death-struck, and the priest made the holy sign and the cross was raised. 'The belfry—the belfry ! ' cried the sexton, and two men ran to the church and brought back a coil of rope, anew provided for the bells. Again they give more rope, and the body of the miser sinks and sinks. 'Pull up the corse,' exclaims the priest ; and twenty men tug at the rope, but cannot lift the dead. As they pause, they hear a clawing at the bottom of the coffin, with smothered shrieks or laughter. Aghast, they quit the rope, when the coffin rushes—rushes—down as into the unfathomable abyss ! 'Who dug the grave ? '—'I—ten feet deep,' cried the sexton.—'Not you, sexton —not you,' said an old monk. 'Last night, I walked here, and I saw things not of this world digging on this spot. There was moonlight, and I saw the glittering of their golden spades ! ' 'Golden spades ! ' cried the young heir.—'Aye, son ; they made the miser's last bed ; for he who hoards the treasures of this world, and looks unmoved on this world's misery, has just this reward—his grave is dug by devils with a golden spade ! ' "

"Mr. Gruelthorpe's mourning, sir ? A boy has just come about it—and he desires that one of the men may take it home."

"Shall I step with it ? " asked John, who had almost breathlessly folded up the coat as Zweifler finished his legend. Zweifler nodded assent, and John hurried away with the suit of solemn black to the disconsolate heir of the muckthrift.

Benjamin Gruelthorpe had been rescued from the ignominy of earning his own bread by the lamented death of his venerable parent, who at the age of three-score and five had dropped like a medlar from the tree of life. Benjamin was determined to act justly by the world ; he resolved on speedily rendering back to men the heap of wealth his sire had slowly gathered from them.

Old Gruelthorpe had a thousand times crucified his soul for a guinea; his only child the airy Benjamin, flung away his inheritance as if his one earthly task was to arrive as soon as possible at his last shilling. With kindly impulses, he had never been taught to look upon his father but as an obstacle to his pleasures; and, capable of affection, he heard the death of the old man with that beating of the heart which tells the prisoner he is free. Benjamin lost not an hour in asserting his new importance; and ere the dead miser was laid in his grave, his spendthrift son had quitted the counter of a pawnbroker for lodgings at a London hotel; where, swathed in a silken morning gown and stretched on a couch—a bank of crimson velvet—he awaited with resignation in his soul and a newspaper in his hand, the coming of the tailor.

Applejohn arrived at the hotel, was instantly shown up to the chief mourner; who, turning his head, and running his fingers through the thousand flaxen rings with which that head had been adorned, deliberately opened his mouth, and hazarded a conjecture. "I 'spose the tailor?" John bowed, and took the suit of sables from the bag.

"What 's o'clock?" asked Benjamin languidly of a tall, grave-looking person, in whose face there were all the deliberative cares of a landlord.

"I should say, sir," replied Mr. Oldjoe, a man who evidently never committed himself—"I should say, sir," and he looked at the chronometer, "seven minutes and a half to ten."

"And Scutcheon, the undertaker, is punctual?"

"As death, sir," said Mr. Oldjoe, swallowing a laugh at his own wit, and then looking more than commonly grave at the great sacrifice.

"How is it, Oldjoe?" and young Gruelthorpe, having donned the black coat, turned his back upon his host—"How is it: a fit?"

"If I hadn't seen you put it on," said the landlord rolling one eye at the tailor,—"I could have sworn you had been born in it."

"Well, that will do. Oldjoe, let the fellow have something," said young Gruelthorpe, exposing his want of gentility by the order.

"What would you like to take?" asked Oldjoe of our tailor, as both descended the stairs.

"I never drink—never," said John with emphasis.

"To be sure not," said the landlord, with a happy look. "No—no man who drinks, could make a coat like that. I'm so glad you won't have my champagne—won't touch my burgundy—can't abide my claret—and would feel poisoned at my straw-coloured brandy. I'm glad of it: but you don't know why? I'll tell you; because it affords me the opportunity of recommending my soda-water."

"Is it so wonderful?" asked Applejohn.

"It 's as good as brandy, without any of its bad character for drunkenness," asseverated the imperturbable Oldjoe. "Wonderful! bless you, it 's so strong, your goose could swim in it. Here, Godfrey, a bottle of soda-water for this gentleman;—the best."

"Have you two sorts of bottles?" questioned John.

"To be sure; five shilling and three-and-six-penny; one for gentlemen, t'other for the poor." At this moment, Mr. Scutcheon entering the hotel, withdrew the attention of the landlord from our temperate tailor; and Oldjoe quitted John to show the page of death to young master Gruelthorpe.

"Oh! the—the undertaker," said Benjamin, still upon the sofa; his hand still among his curls.

Scutcheon bowed, and his long silk hat-band rustled an avowal of his trade.

"Have you removed the—the"—the afflicted son, with the tip of his third finger, tried to displace a possible tear from the corner of his right eye—"the—the body?" and Benjamin, smoothing the collar of his shirt, sighed tolerably deeply.

"To my own house, sir," said Mr. Scutcheon, looking big with the feelings of hospitality. "Last night, sir—in the hearse, sir—from the residence of the deceased." The residence! Emanuel Gruelthorpe had died in an obscure and filthy shed—a hovel hardly fit to shelter cattle. The residence! The residence of a rat.

"I hope everything has been attended to with regard to my feelings?" said Benjamin.

"Oh, sir! you may rely upon the character of our firm for that," answered the undertaker.

"Oldjoe;"—the landlord crossed to the sofa of young Gruelthorpe, who spoke in a low and confidential voice to his host, Mr. Scutcheon being too much rapt by the character of his firm to overhear their conversation. "Oldjoe," said Benjamin in little above a whisper—"we shall dine at seven, mind; a good show."—

"A spanish mahogany coffin," said Scutcheon, doggedly enumerating the triumphs of the firm on the body of the deceased.—

"Your best plate," whispered Benjamin.—

"Silver plate and silver handles," said Scutcheon.—

"There 'll be eight of us to feed," continued Benjamin.—

"Fourteen mourners," said the undertaker, "to make 'em spread, in seven coaches."—

"I hope the haunch will stand us all," observed the son.—

"And six to bear," remarked Scutcheon.—

"Oh! and don't forget the singers, for after dinner," warned young Gruelthorpe.—

"I have engaged two," said Oldjoe.—"Wonderful men! been offered any terms by a Russian duke who lived here—but patriots, sir; wouldn't leave their country."—

"After dinner, we must have—humph!—what d'ye call it?" whispered Benjamin.—

"*Non nobis,*" replied Oldjoe, in an equally reduced voice.—

"Then we shall be met by the charity children," continued the undertaker.—

"I suppose they can sing anything?" asked Gruelthorpe of the landlord.—

"Sing! You 'll have '*When Bibo thought fit*' and '*Pretty painted fly*' to admiration," said Oldjoe.—

"The whole to be wound up with a hymn at the vault on the virtues of the deceased," said Scutcheon.—

"I say, Oldjoe; the champagne—the claret, eh? prime," said the chief mourner, still whispering.—

"And for the vault," said the undertaker in a loud voice, arriving at the climax of his good things—"And for the vault,"—

"Trust my cellar," cried Oldjoe to the heir in a raised note.—

"It 's so dry," exclaimed Scutcheon; "instead of putting your father in it, you might keep wine there."—

"Wine!" cried the roused Benjamin; "oh!" and, slightly colouring, he rose from the sofa, put his hands into mourning, took his hat from his estimable landlord, and tripped solemnly down stairs to the funeral coach.

We should be unjust to Benjamin did we pass in silence the magnificent evidence of his filial love as displayed through the kind cares of the undertaker. The very grave-diggers paused in admiration of the coffin!

"Anything in the papers?". asked young Gruelthorpe the next day of Oldjoe.

"The arrivals at 'the Hotel' in the *Post*," said the landlord.

"I mean, about the—the funeral," said Benjamin, putting his hand to his head all unused to the fumes of burgundy.

"Not a word, sir;"—said Oldjoe.

"No! well, well, it 's best—I 'm glad of it; such matters should be kept quiet. Some soda." The draught, that at five shillings, no doubt, was brought and swallowed; and Benjamin stretched himself upon the couch in deep study.

"It 's very odd, sir, that we have heard no news of the balloon,"

said Oldjoe, with his immovable dead-man face—"though, I suppose we shall, sir, as soon as intelligence arrives."

"And not a word?" said Benjamin, in a state of abstraction.

"Not a word, sir. By-the-bye, sir, that 's a shocking accident that 'death by charcoal.' Captain Nitre, sir; house newly painted—dried by charcoal fires—went in too soon—died. Heard there were charcoal fires in the house of the dowager Lady Littlebit—she, who has the next suite of rooms; folded down the paper, as in duty bound, at the very paragraph. An excellent lady—a woman who doesn't fly in the face of Providence. Directly she smells the charcoal, she rings the bell—'Mr. Oldjoe,' says her ladyship, 'I shall stay with you another week.' Poor Captain Nitre."—

"D—— that fellow!" cried Gruelthorpe suddenly.

"What! the captain?" said Oldjoe calmly.

"No—no—no. Captain! I mean the fellow who dined with me—he promised to put a full account of it in all the newspapers!"

Yes; whilst the mercenary Oldjoe discoursed of things pertaining to his proper interest, the young heir was meditating on the funeral of his departed father.

CHAPTER VI.

It was evening, and John Applejohn sat alone in the house of Mr. Zweifler. The mansion had been left in the care of the maid servant, who, about dusk, addressed herself to the humane feelings of John. She had to step a little way, and would Mr. Applejohn—she would not be out ten minutes—would he be so very good as to take care of the house until she came back? John lived only to grant favours. Hence, he was left in charge of the dwelling, and had remained its sole inhabitant about three-quarters of an hour—for women, under some circumstances, have a most incorrect notion of the course of time—when he heard footsteps on the staircase. He thought it was the maid returned; but, looking over the banister, saw two men, cautiously bearing a load wrapt in a sheet, enter the front room of the first floor. There was something mysterious in their measured step—their profound silence. John felt his heart suddenly beat, and fear held him motionless. He knew that one of the men was the accepted tenant of the apartment he had entered—that, contrary to the usual custom of Zweifler, the tailor had intrusted him with

a key, by means of which he had now silently entered the house : but who was the other man—and what could it be—for there, indeed, lay the mystery,—that they bore between them ? Whilst John stood thus perplexed, he saw the door open and the two men—their burden being left in the room—re-appear. John held his breath, and watched, and listened.

"There, my man," said the lodger, in a soft voice, and put something into the hand of his coarse companion.

"What 's this ?" asked the fellow, affecting admirable ignorance of the coin, as he frowned sulkily upon a piece of silver. "What 's this ?"

"A shilling," replied the lodger, condescending to become instructor.

"Why, you never mean it ?" said the man, in a tone of remonstrance, almost subdued to the pathetic. "You never mean it ?"

"Indeed, I do," answered the gentleman, firm in his meaning. "Isn't it your fare ?"

"Perhaps it is, if you count by distance," said he, who proved to be a coachman.

"What by, then, if not by distance ?" inquired the lodger.

"Come, come," remarked the coachman, and a gleam of benevolence lighted his broad face—"I won't split."

"Split !" exclaimed the lodger in a voice that seemed to leave the operation entirely at the will of the charioteer.

"You know,—I can tell what I 've brought—but when a gentleman is a gentleman, why then," but the coachman did not proceed with the consequence.

"Brought ! Why, what have you brought ?" asked the lodger.

The coachman took his own nose between his finger and thumb, gave a short, quick shake of the head, as if moved by some sudden disgust, and said—"I sha'n't get the coach sweet for a month."

"Ha ! ha ! I 'll give no more," said the lodger, and he turned into his room, leaving the coachman at the door. The man stood, eyeing the barrier with a look of doubt. Should he strike his leg through the panel—or should he quietly turn the handle, and go in and fight ? Thus irresolute, he again cast his wandering eye upon the shilling ; when, like the Duke of Austria, he pocketted his wrongs "because his breeches best might carry them." The fellow lumbered down the staircase, growling, "a murdering set of shabby villains," and closed the door with a violence that admirably conveyed his indignation and contempt of the first-floor lodger.

It was the pure and firm belief of the coachman that he had been hired as a humble labourer in the fields of science; retained to convey a dead body to the lodgings of a surgical student intent on a most laudable and interesting pursuit. If the man had any faith in his own nose, the taint of death still hung upon,—nay, as he had asserted, would continue to defile the inside of the vehicle, for, possibly, a calendar month: and for this pollution, he had received a—shilling!

The poet says—"We murder to dissect." We know not if, on the evening in question, John Applejohn was altogether of the opinion of William Wordsworth, but certainly he had a startling notion that blood had been shed—a belief strengthened by the avowal of the coachman, that if properly remunerated for the secrecy he would disdain to peach. And then, suddenly came upon the affrighted tailor the mysterious visit of old Zweifler to "The Bottle of Hay"—(for, at the time, John had not discovered the object of his master in such a practice;)—the solemn words, "cut me off that fellow!"—his strange looks—his doubts of all men—his frequent tales of devilry and witchcraft! And then John recollected, that Germans were to be especially mistrusted; and then he firmly believed in some fearful contract between the lodger in the first floor and old Zweifler. John had never thought anything of the rumour; but now he remembered that several tailors, having been employed by Zweifler, were shortly after missing! Such was the credulity of John—such his overflowing benevolence—that he was resolved to rush into the street, seize on two or three of the passengers, and bring them to apprehend the murderer in the first floor. Already had the simplicity of the tailor painted to him a victim with two or three mortal gashes. Perhaps, a youth, the hope and stay of a poor widow! Perhaps, a girl, some lovely lost one! Tears were starting to the eyes of John at the spectre of his own imagination: he was about to run down the staircase, when he heard the lodger open his door—saw him come out—lock the door, put the key in his pocket, and descend. In a minute, the street-door was opened and shut, and John Applejohn, in his own strong conceit, remained alone in a house with a body of the murdered. He turned as cold as the corse itself—if, indeed, it was yet cold—and his teeth struck together, and his hair stirred. At length, with a vigorous effort, he walked down stairs. He panted with horror as he approached the door—the thin partition between him and a slaughtered corpse. Macbeth—even when played by Macready—when grasped and dragged by the invisible hands of the witches, and held writhing at the chamber of Duncan—has not a more awful face than had our paralysed tailor. He stooped, his whole body

shaking like a deer's tail, and put his eye to the key-hole. The room was dark! John rose, and with new courage resolved to get a light. He departs, and, in a few minutes, returns with a lighted candle and a bundle of keys—miraculously left by old Zweifler in the tailors' room. Yes—John had determined to appease his own doubts, ere he gave the alarm: the mystery might be satisfactorily explained, and then what could he say for himself at having raised a tumult? If, on the contrary, an assassination had really taken place, on discovering the fact, he had only to throw up the window, and give a loud call of murder. With this benevolent intention, John tried every key, in the fond hope that one might be found to open the Abomeleque's room—the Blue Chamber of blood and mystery. Alas! the good intentions, the excellent meaning of Applejohn were not seconded by fortune: no key would stir the lock. John had tried every key, and cast his eyes upwards with a look of despair, when, to our pain we speak it, he saw a nail—a crooked nail in the wall. John had a vague recollection that locks had been turned back by so small an implement as the nail above him. The devil walked behind the tailor, and grinned in deep satisfaction, as he beheld John Applejohn arm himself with a hammer to wrench out the nail. Fixed upon his knees, his face to the door, with one hand guiding the bent nail, the other grasping the candlestick, John laboured hard in the cause of justice. A stranger beholding him would have felt tolerably well convinced that John was working at the lock with a most felonious intention; whereas, he was a labouring disciple in the sacred cause of humanity. He appeared to vulgar eyes a house-breaker, when, in truth, he was never so much a philanthropist. Still John laboured; now paused and wiped his brow, and again addressed himself to his work. At length, the bolt moves—again—another turn—the bolt is back! John is rising from his knees, when he is pinned to the floor by a hand fixed in his collar,—and four knuckles embedded in his jugular;—this sudden action is accompanied by the following words:—

"Teeves—teeves—lights,"—the candle had been knocked down by John's assailant,—"murder!"

"Murder—thieves—murder—murder," was taken up by a female voice; for the maid had just let herself into the passage, and was followed by the first-floor lodger, who immediately proceeded up-stairs, the girl quickly attending with a lighted candle. Luckless John Applejohn!

He remained still upon his knees, and the hand of old Zweifler still at his neck; the bunch of keys—fifty dumb, yet speaking witnesses beside him; and—oh! guilt, guilt beyond the cunning

of defence—the crooked nail between John Applejohn's thumb and finger.

"Teef—rogue—oh, oh! dis is your work on Mondays!" cried Zweifler, pale with passion.

"Mr. Zweifler, as I live—I—you don't know what I know," said Applejohn.

"I should have been hanged dirty years ago if I had," said the tailor.

"Betty," said the tenant of the first-floor, "you had better go for an officer."

"No—no—no," said old Zweifler, with rapid vehemence—"No—no."

"Yes, Betty—do—go for an officer," cried John—"I wish for an officer. Then it will all come out."

"Come out!" exclaimed Zweifler.

"Come out," repeated John. "There 's been murder done. The body is now in that room. I saw it—with my own eyes saw it! Oh, you needn't stare," cried John to the astonished lodger,—"I saw you and the coachman: heard him say he wouldn't turn king's evidence, and all I wanted was first to be sure that—"

"An unblushing, bare-faced thief! And you think that this fetch will save you? Caught in the fact, and now have the impudence to trump up this defence," and the lodger opened the door, and entered the room, followed by John and the amazed Zweifler. "See, sir; see," and the speaker uncovered the object, carefully swathed in linen—"see, sir; a lay-figure of the Venus," said the tenant artist.

Zweifler turned a fierce eye upon Applejohn, who, astounded at the discovery, stood for a moment speechless. At length he stammered out—"I—I did it all for the best: may I die this minute, if I didn't mean well." The old tailor shook his head incredulously.

"Run for an officer," again repeated Mr. Dolce, the artist; and again Zweifler countermanded the order.

"No," said the old man, "no: I trusted him, and he has deceived me."

"Mr. Zweifler, as true as there 's a heaven," exclaimed our luckless hero.

"Go, John Applejohn, go; I leave you to your conscience, go; I will not hang you—no: you shall not dis time die mit a rope at your neck—but you shall live mit a halter round about your heart. Go, John; go," and the old man's eyes filled with tears as he turned from Applejohn, who passionately, yet vainly, pleaded against the damning evidence of the keys and nail. In

fine, our well-meaning friend was thrust out of doors, Betty vainly begging that he might be detained until she had searched her boxes.

John stood in the street, bewildered, broken-hearted! He tried to walk, and staggered like a tipsy satyr. In the whole world there was not a more sober, a more honest man. He had been cast off by his first love as a drunkard, and was now spurned and branded as a thief. When somewhat recovered from his stupor, his first feelings were those of vengeance on all mankind. If he were treated like a wretch, why not be the sot and knave? From that moment, he would drink and rob; he would laugh at sobriety, and think the honest man a masking cheat. For an instant was John Applejohn an embryo tippler and cut-purse; an undaunted ragamuffin; and then, his true nature returning upon him, he leaned against the railings of a house and cried like a baby!

CHAPTER VII.

Whilst in Mr. Zweifler's service, John had lived with the closest economy; hence, on his expulsion from the house, he was master of a few pounds, and could therefore go far away from uncharitable, heartless London. Surely there was some green spot in the world where good intentions must bring forth good fruits; some land, where if a man sowed wheat, he would not gather hemp. It was about a fortnight after his last sorrow, when John stood at the window of a map-seller. What a spot was England in the painted sheet! John had suffered injuries, but never before had he thought so meanly of his native country. France was open to him—so was America—so Van Diemen's Land. John had in idea thrice circumnavigated the globe, and yet remained undecided in his choice of a home; like a dog that turns round and round and round, and fain would yet cannot, curl itself up to rest. Visions of prosperous felons came upon John as his eye sailed up Sidney Cove!

"What! you are looking for lodgings to let?—plenty of 'em there, unfurnished too," and the speaker pointed to a map of Egypt.

Applejohn turned, and looking up, beheld Mr. Oldjoe in his walking-dress. He wore a sky-blue neckerchief, a pink and yellow striped waistcoat, claret-coloured trowsers, and a green coat, heavily studded with metal buttons, bearing in *alto relievo* the portraits of a fox and goose. Judging Oldjoe by his dress, he

looked a harlequin *incog;* whilst his face had the rigid solemnity of a tax-gatherer.

"Mr. Oldjoe! is it you?" said John timidly.

"It was, yesterday," replied the delicious wag; and he nodded familiarly to a reverend gentleman, at the moment passing in his carriage.

"Bless me!" cried Applejohn, "isn't that the Archbishop of"—

"To be sure; didn't you see me nod to him? I always support the established church," said Oldjoe. "No pride about me."

"Good day, sir," and John was sneaking off.

"Wait, my little man, wait;" and Oldjoe took a card-case from his waistcoat-pocket, and John held out his hand for a card. Oldjoe stared at him, as if unconscious of anything ridiculous, and leisurely extracted from the case a handkerchief of about two inches square. "Always carry your comforts in a little space," said Oldjoe brushing the end of his nose, and then returning the lawn to its small depositary. "Ha! why didn't you bow?"

"Bow, sir?" said John.

"Didn't you see him?—One of the judges: always be civil to 'em, you don't know what may happen. Stop—stop my little man;" for Applejohn was about to slip away—"Mr. Gruelthorpe wants you."

"I—I am not with Mr. Zweifler at present," said John.

"All the better. You are not married?" asked Oldjoe.

"No," replied John, hesitating for a sigh.

"And have no children? Now, be sure," observed the wit.

"None in the least," answered John.

"Have no objection to travel for all that?" said Oldjoe—"I know you hav'n't: I watched you at the maps. What do you think of Sierra Leone? Take out enough black with you, and you'd make your fortune in a twelvemonth; yes, although one suit of mourning lasts three in a family, and is then as good as new."

"I shouldn't prefer Sierra Leone," said the tailor.

"No—I see you're not avaricious. Just like my friend, Lord Ladle; takes out his pension in blankets for the poor, and yet none of 'em know it. Mr. Gruelthorpe is about to travel, and wants a confidential tailor. Now, what do you think of it?" and Oldjoe looked down immoveably on John.

"I have nothing to keep me in London," said the desolate Applejohn.

"Well, when I return from sea, I 'll settle the business for you," said Oldjoe.

"Are you going to sea, Mr. Oldjoe?" asked John in some surprise.

"Yes; let me consider—the wind 's north-west: I think, north-west? Well, then, I shall be back on Friday—call on me at two on Friday. As for the wind, I know that will be all right—so say two on Friday," and with never a smile on his blank face, Oldjoe strided off.

"What an extraordinary man! and how very humorous," thought Applejohn, whose spirit was lightened by the communication of the arch wag, and he looked foward to Friday with renewed hopes. The day came, and John presented himself at the hotel; the day passed, and no Oldjoe appeared. Doubtless, thought John, he is still tossing on the briny wave. Early next morning, John was at his post; and still no landlord had been visible. John waited until noon, and it then struck him that as accidents did sometimes happen on the main, it would be a waste of time to wait any longer for an introduction by a man, who, it was by no means improbable, might at that moment be drifting out to the North Sea. Thus, John resolved at once to solicit an interview with Mr. Gruelthorpe.

"I have been so bold, sir,"—began John with all humility, when he was interrupted by the sudden appearance of Oldjoe.

"I 've caught the duke—said I should—safe!" cried Oldjoe, whose charm of original drollery had made him a familiar favourite with young Gruelthorpe. "Lord Nelson couldn't have done it better."

"What duke?" asked Gruelthorpe, "and where have you been these three days?"

"Been to sea. Look here," and Oldjoe exhibited a telescope two yards long. "My motto like the marines, 'by sea and by land.' Heard he was coming."

"Who was coming?" inquired the astonished guest.

"The Russian duke; got scent of his highness, and would hook him. We got down to the Great Nore; and there we lay to. A whole day and night, and no signs of the duke. I was determined to have him; so I said, 'my boys, put the helm up for St. Petersburgh!' I had hardly said this, when sweeping the horizon, as my friend Napier would say, I saw a steamer. I knew by the look of her that there was royalty aboard. 'Lobsters from Heligoland,' said Telemaque my interpreter; for I 've left off French myself, it 's so common—'Lobsters from Heligoland,' said Telemaque—'a duke,' cried I. 'Steer down upon her,' said I—'they're putting on more coals, and I 'll board her in the smoke.' I lay in this manner, with my eye at my glass, and with that sagacity which makes me first in the trade, discovered the duke himself eating caviare in the cabin. 'Easy, lads, easy,' said I: 'easy, and I 'll board her on the larboard

paddle-box'—I had hardly said 'box,' when my foot was on it; and I was actually standing in the state cabin, in front of the duke himself.—Count de Grasse was never so completely taken."

"And the Russian duke will absolutely be your guest?" asked Gruelthorpe.

"He couldn't refuse me. He couldn't with any decency. Look here;" and Oldjoe exhibited the collar and cuffs of his coat trimmed with fur six inches deep. "Do you see this?"

"What of it?" questioned the heir.

"Real silver bear,—every bit of it bear. The Russian duke saw the delicate compliment paid to his country, and could refuse me nothing. Mr. Gruelthorpe,"—and Oldjoe spoke with new seriousness—"there is nothing like studying national prejudices. As an innkeeper, I've been taught the value of it."

"Indeed, Mr. Oldjoe."

"Bitterly taught it. There were four of us in opposition went out to take the Persian Princes on their passage here.—Well, how do you think I lost 'em? By my ignorance of national prejudices."

"How?" asked Gruelthorpe.

"Why, the successful landlord—the man who got them to his house—boarded 'em in the channel with a sample of boiled rice:" and had Oldjoe sworn an affidavit to the fact, he had not sworn with a more collected visage.

"Then you tavern-keepers stop these people on the water?"

"There never was such a look out for foreigners on the high seas, as since the peace. If there's a mortality among the pilots," said Oldjoe, "and a war should break out, there isn't an hotel-keeper westward who couldn't take a fleet through the Channel."

"And have many crowned heads fallen to your lot?" asked Gruelthorpe.

"Crowned heads, sir!" said Oldjoe, letting the exclamation pass for an answer. "Crowned heads! you've seen me wear a ring on my right little finger?"

"I can't recollect the circumstance," said Gruelthorpe.

"Yes, yes—you must recollect it. Hem! Donna Maria's own hair," and Oldjoe stroked his chin and looked away at the opposite wall. "But it's hard work—very hard work. To go out in all weathers; to brave the wind and fog, and—hem! hem! h—m!—yes, I've caught it," and Oldjoe, for he was musical, threw up the lid of a piano, and stooping over the keys, confused them with his fingers, as he tried his singing voice:—

"'What shall I do, to show how much I love her?'"

"Do you hear that?" asked the vocalist—"My falsetto has an edge like a saw. You see, they ar'n't all profit, these dukes."

"And when does his highness come, Mr. Oldjoe?"

"To-night. He was to land at—oh! my little man," and for the first time Oldjoe deigned to notice the taciturn tailor.

"I came yesterday, sir," said John, "but as you were not here, and hadn't arrived this morning, I thought I had better speak myself on"—

"Yes, yes: just like the world," replied Oldjoe with an injured look, "you didn't care whether I was shipwrecked or not; you'd have eaten your cold mutton all the same."

"I assure you, sir,"—

"You would;" said Oldjoe sternly—"you know you would; and if you could have got 'em, pickles with it. However, I am above thinking of these things. Mr. Gruelthorpe, you want a valet—here's your man."

"Why isn't this—yes—isn't he a tailor?" inquired Gruelthorpe.

"It can't be denied—he is a tailor. But, sir, this is the age of economy—must go with the times, sir; I have reduced my own soda a shilling a bottle,—now, if you can get your body servant and your tailor in one man, eh?"—

"Perhaps, 'twould be convenient," said Gruelthorpe, and preliminaries arranged, John Applejohn was duly accepted. He, however, mainly owed his good fortune to the fact, that three previous candidates for the office, had instantly withdrawn their claims on learning the plebeian origin of their would-be master, Benjamin Gruelthorpe.

CHAPTER VIII.

John Applejohn received the order of his master to prepare for travel, with renewed hopes of enjoying a just interpretation of his good intentions; for, all the unmerited injuries inflicted upon John had failed to sour the sweetness of his temper, to chill the honest blood that flowed within him. He had lived in what very virtuous people call this very wicked world five-and-twenty years, and was almost as simple as when he first snuffed the air. The consciousness of his well-meaning was an armour against the knocks of fortune—balm and spikenard to his hurts. Strong in his good intentions, he could not consider any evil but as a passing accident, a mistake to be cleared up by and by. We verily believe that he would have put his head into a halter

with hardly a wry face at the injustice of the sentence, strong in the assurance that in a very little time, a very handsome epitaph would sweeten and make white his memory. Happy John Applejohn!

Benjamin Gruelthorpe had too long delayed, as he conceived the most important step in his life. He had been his own master nine months; had delighted the devil, the patron of all misers, by casting away with a free hand the money which his father had sinned for; but was yet only at the alpha of his manly knowledge. Foreign travel was indispensable to even a common education; and though at the time Benjamin quitted London he had not made up his mind to the extent of his peregrinations—though he had not then determined upon going as far as Tadmor in the Desert, he had firmly resolved to see the Palais Royal. It was in the laudable pursuit of such useful knowledge that Benjamin Gruelthorpe, Esq., attended by his servant, put up at the ———, Canterbury, on his way to Dover.

"I don't care, if I see the cathedral," said young Gruelthorpe with the air of a man about to confer an honour. Knowing no one in the city, he bethought himself of the tombs; having no letter of introduction to so much as an alderman, he resolved to call on the Black Prince. Nothing, perhaps, could so well illustrate the inexperience of our traveller as his deplorable ignorance of the social state, not of Canterbury alone, but of every place dignified by a cathedral; where the small distinctions, the delicate shades of place and fortune, seem wholly forgotten in the active principles of brotherly love. The purple raiment is not hastily caught away from the passing touch of coarser web—the finest lawn makes common cause with any linen bands—the silken apron shrinks not from poor prunella. Let pride, and pomp, and heartburnings for precedence swell, and strut and smoulder where they may, they never have been—they never can be—found where man finds a cathedral. All who live within the glad sounds of its chimes, live peaceably as sheep within a green enclosure.

"I don't care if I see the cathedral," said Benjamin, and sallied from the inn followed by his trusty Applejohn.

"Would you like to walk inside, sir?" asked an old woman, as young Gruelthorpe stood gaping at the exterior of the edifice. "You had better walk in, sir," said the dame, in a like hospitable tone to that which may have fallen on the ear of the reader, tarrying before a caravan, arrested by the outside portrait of the giant or the dwarf within.

Benjamin entered the cathedral, and the old woman began her task. "This cathedral was once the palace of King Ethelbert

the King of Kent, who made a present of the same to St. Augustine,"——

"Very handsome of him," said Benjamin, "wasn't it, John?" asked Gruelthorpe, unbending to his domestic.

"Very like a gentleman," replied John,

"And went and lived upon the Reculvers. Here, gentlemen," continued the old woman, "is many monuments as your eyes may detect. Them in the wall is called mural monuments the cause unknown. That monument is of Orlando Gibbons who came to play upon the organ when King Charles the First was married and died of the small-pox that fatal accident happening in 1625,—under your feet there was many archbishops and friars; but in the civil wars the gravestones was dilapidated, the ornaments absconded, and the bishops deprived of their brass a shocking thing for any christian to relate. You will find more of this in Mr. Weever," said the old woman, and she paused and boked at Benjamin.

"I—I—I'm aware," said Gruelthorpe, sucking the head of his cane.

"When the new pavement was put down the remains very handsomely dressed of archbishop Tibbald was found in a leaden plate. That gentleman laying on his side is Sir John Boys in his doctor's robes."

"Very much injured;" John observed deferentially. "By time no doubt?"

"And the soldiers," continued the guide. "He lost his nose and other faculties in the great rebellion."

"Lovely thing, that," said Benjamin, gazing at one of the windows, the sun lighting up the glories of the stained glass—"a lovely thing."

"It has been much admired," observed the old woman, slowly rubbing her hands, and then placidly folding her arms.

"Very beautiful, indeed, sir," said John: "I don't wonder at your liking it."

"Liking it!" exclaimed Gruelthorpe—"it's glorious! I'd give any money to have it."

"No money would buy it, sir," remarked the woman.

"Besides, sir," said Applejohn, "where could you place the window—where could you possibly put it?"

"Put it! Pooh—fool! I mean I'd give any money," and Benjamin continued to stare at the radiant glass, "yes, any money to have those very colours in a dress-waistcoat."

"Beautiful by candle-light," said the old woman, rightly falling in with the enthusiasm of Benjamin; and then proceeding in her duties. "You are requested to bear in mind gentlemen that you

are now arrived at the martyrdom where Becket was massacreed and on that very account where Edward the First and his Queen was married. Erasmus a learned Dutchman, although according to great authors a love-child, came here on his visit to King Henry the Eighth his statue is in the market-place of Rotterdam —he kissed the sword which killed St. Thomas and wrote a book in which he proved that him who could be the greatest fool would in the end be the same as the wisest man. That image in oak is archbishop Peckham in very good repair being five hundred years old."

"A great age," observed Applejohn.

"'Straordinary, how bishops *do* last!" said Gruelthorpe, and still he sucked his cane.

"Several archbishops and friars lay here so much defaced that if their dearest relations was again alive they wouldn't know 'em. You are now in the chapel of St. Michael: over there," and the woman pointed upwards, "was once an organ and is still. Those saints in the panels is St. Augustine and St. Gregory barbarously fired at by Oliver Cromwell's soldiers the marks of the bullets still to be seen by the curious and humane observer."

"Another window!" exclaimed Gruelthorpe, and possibly he thought of a second waistcoat.

"That window is the eastern window," said the woman, "there you see is a white stag with a crown upon its head resting under a tree a greyhound doing the same thing. That is a tomb of alablaster the figures upon it the figures of Margaret sister of the Earl of Kent and the Earl of Somerset and Duke of Clarence her two lawfully-married husbands; they are all laying together in expectation of a happier state."

Applejohn looked at the placid faces, the composed forms of the effigies, and then catching the eye of his master, observed—"Very solemn, this, sir?"

Young Gruelthorpe took his cane from his mouth, pulled up his shirt-collar, and replied—"'Straordinary."

"And was all this done at the request of any of the parties?" asked John Applejohn, pointing to the tomb.

"Under the living eye of the widow herself who died sensible to the last the guide thanks you for what you please," and the woman dropping a curtsey, and holding forth her hand, implied by the action that her task was done.

"Is nothing more to be seen?" asked Gruelthorpe, laying a half-crown in the hand of his instructress. "Nothing more?"

"There is Becket's shrine," answered the guide, "and the Black Prince, both the property of another woman."

"Property!" exclaimed John.

"She shows 'em," answered the matron, hobbling hastily away in search of new comers.

"Wonderful thing! this, sir," said John, raising his eyes to the roof with a feeling of awe. "I don't know how it is, sir; but whenever I come into a place like this, I feel myself now as small and as mean as a fly, and now as big and as mighty as a giant."

Benjamin Gruelthorpe, with his cane in his mouth, nodded.

"And then, sir, to hear the organ in a church like this! I declare, sir, it seems to me as if a river of blood flowed from it."

"Blood!" said Gruelthorpe, with a hazy look. "'Straordinary!"

"I don't mean that, sir; I mean, that when I hear the organ peal, every little vein in my body seems filling and filling from it, and my heart grows as great as a drum, and I shoot up fifty feet high, and I seem as if, big as the church may be, it isn't big enough for me; and I could cry and fight, and pray and kneel, and I still seem to get higher and higher, and bigger and bigger."

"'Straordinary!" repeated Gruelthorpe.

"It's true, sir: quite true. When the organ plays in such a place as this, it seems like a—a—I don't know what to call it—a river emptying itself into me."

"An organ a river? Humph?" and Gruelthorpe sucked his cane.

"There's magic in it, sir—I mean, lawful magic, or something like it. For when it plays, I've seen, or I've thought I've seen, the faces upon the monuments almost smile."

"'Straordinary!" cried Benjamin.

"Ha! sir—it is very strange, very strange, indeed; but I want to ask you one question. I hope it's not an improper one?"

"I hope not," said Mr. Gruelthorpe with an air of dignity. "I hope not."

"I want to ask you, sir, if—now, I hope I'm not asking anything that anybody would think wrong?" and John hesitated.

"I trust not," said Benjamin; "only don't presume on my good-nature, John: in what you may be about to ask, you will, I trust, be pleased to recollect that you are my servant, I am your master."

"Oh! sir, never fear: I only want to ask you something about a church organ," said Applejohn.

"Very well—go on," observed Gruelthorpe, somewhat relieved; for he feared some delicate family question on the part of his domestic. "Well—what about the organ?"

"Why, sir, hav'n't you thought, when you've heard it in full play, that the organ was really and truly"—and John paused.

"Really and truly, what?"

"Really and truly—a—a bit of the next world?" and John looked anxiously in the face of his master.

Benjamin Gruelthorpe took his cane from his mouth, ran his fingers through his hair, and making answer, said—"I—I can't say."

"Depend upon it, sir, it is; and nothing else," said Applejohn. "Ha! sir—this is a terrible place," and John raised his arms in wonder and veneration. "A terrible place!"

"I see nothing terrible in it—very fine," said Gruelthorpe.

"Why, it is fine, sir—but to me, it's more terrible than fine. And yet I think better of myself, when I think that men, perhaps, as weak and as mean as I am, helped to make it," said John.

"Very possible," observed John's master.

"And doesn't it make you prouder, sir, that you're a man?" asked Applejohn.

"I hope, I have something better to be proud of," replied Benjamin Gruelthorpe.

"You see, sir, though I'm a poor, ignorant fellow myself, it does my heart good, puts hope into me, when I think of the wonderful things done by creatures, who with all their wisdom, were only men. The very thought of it gives me a lift with myself, sir."

"'Straordinary!" remarked Gruelthorpe, gazing about him. "To be sure," said Benjamin, scarcely knowing what he said, "a solemn place like this—that's a sweet pretty figure in the pink gown—a solemn place like this is likely to make us think of to-morrow."

"Oh! yes, sir, and of yesterday," replied John. "I'm sure I could stay among some of these figures until I should feel that I quite knew 'em; it makes us older to think of 'em; hundreds of years older, sir. I wonder, where you and I were, sir, five hundred years ago?"

"Very 'straordinary," observed Gruelthorpe, somewhat tickled by the solemn speculations of his servant.

"You know, we must have been somewhere, sir," said Applejohn.

"Why—I—I should say, John, it's a—that is—it's a long time back, John."

"And only to think that—that—I don't know what I was going to say, sir," was the candid avowal of our hero, who felt himself getting fast out of his depth. "I know no more what I was going to say, sir, than, saving the presence of the tombs about me, than a jackass."

"'Straordinary!" exclaimed John's master at the coarse com-

parison of his servant. The truth is, in any other place John would have compared himself to a ninny, a blockhead, a goose; but a deep sense of his forlorn ignorance took the strongest image, and he could away with nothing less than a jackass.

"As you have said, sir," remarked John, after a pause, and desirous of renewing the theme—"that 's a beautiful window."

"Splendid colours," said Benjamin.

"I suppose there 's some meaning in all those figures, and in that white stag, sir, and the dog? They ar'n't there for nothing?"

"By no means," answered Gruelthorpe. "No doubt, they're portraits. Some of 'em beautiful faces; never saw any more beautiful, never. 'Straordinary!"

"Ha! sir," exclaimed John with a groan, and still gazing at the heads in the painted window. "Ha! sir."

"What the—I mean, what 's the matter?" asked Benjamin.

"You talked of beautiful faces, sir? I 'm afraid it 's sinful; but there 's a face in that window that 's as like as"—and then John turned to his master, and with pathetic earnestness observed,—"but you never saw Sarah Twopenny?"

"Perhaps, you would like to see the cathedral?" asked another old woman, coming up to Gruelthorpe, and without waiting for a reply, adding—"this way, sir, to the shrine." Benjamin obediently followed the woman, and John, tearing himself from the painted window, walked after his master.

"This, ladies and gentlemen," said the female, addressing a party already awaiting her lecture, "this is the monument of the famous Edward, known as the Black Prince, in consequence of his wearing armour of that colour. He died at Canterbury, at the palace of the archbishop, a prelate celebrated for his hospitality. You will observe that the monument is in excellent preservation, being as good as new. That is the figure of his Royal Highness, double gilt. There you see, hanging above the monument, is his Royal Highness's gauntlet or glove worn in those days. You also see his scabbard, being a remarkably small one for so great a hero."

"Pray, pardonnez moy, but—my good woman—if that ere is the scabbard, what is, scusez moi, become of the sword?"

This question was put in a remarkably small voice, by a little, dapper person, who, at every word patted his head, as if to assist him in the delivery of English. He wore a moustache not unlike a very old tooth-brush.

"An illustrious foreigner, no doubt," thought young Gruelthorpe.

"The sword," replied the woman, "was feloniously stolen

by Oliver Cromwell, and never returned. That is his Royal Highness's surcoat, which he wore against the Frenchmen, beautifully quilted."

"'Straordinary!" said Gruelthorpe.

"It is not so sure that he licked the François," said the man with the moustache, patting his head.

"People are left to their own opinion," said the severely precise guide, looking sourly at the doubter — "'specially foreigners."

"And pray, what tomb is that?" asked a pretty country girl, whose figure in a pink gown had received the praises of the critical Gruelthorpe.

"That, my young lady, is the tomb of Archbishop Courtney, who died in 1396. The censorious have called it a cenotaph," said the guide.

"'Straordinary," cried Gruelthorpe.

"Shameful!" exclaimed the foreigner.

"My good woman, what do you call a—a—what you called just now—what is it?" was the inquiry of a visitor, and Gruelthorpe and his man John listened attentively for the interpretation.

"A cenotaph," replied the woman with considerable dignity, "a cenotaph has nobody in it."

"A tomb to let," concluded John.

"The idle and malicious assert that the archbishop is buried at Maidstone; but it is no such thing. We warrant all his mortal remains to be here. That is the monument of Dean Wootton, the first protestant dean: you perceive that he is in the attitude of kneeling. The sculpture is much admired: the head particularly, which the dean himself had cut upon his travels, expressly for the present occasion."

"Ha! a dean particularly should always be prepared," said John, with much simplicity.

"And now, ladies and gentlemen, you see the very spot where you might once have seen the very shrine of St. Thomas à Becket. He was buried in a coffin of gold, mounted with precious stones, the smallest of which was larger than the largest known egg of the largest known goose."

"And what became of 'em?" asked the suspected foreigner.

"They were stolen by the authority of his blessed Majesty, Henry the Eighth," answered the guide. "The face of the martyr was shown in"—

"Granny," cried a little boy, who had run to the woman, and kept pulling at her skirts,—"granny, dumplings is done."

"The face of the martyr," repeated the woman, putting aside

the boy, " was set in gold, and adorned with jewels, and whatever you please, ladies and gentlemen, to bestow upon the guide will be received as a token of your liberality."

" Those fellows played pretty tricks, then, sir," said Gruelthorpe, making up to the man with the moustache.

" Ye—yes," said the foreigner. " Dat is,—wee."

" Capital jugglers, sir," said Benjamin, and to his astonishment, the foreigner abruptly turned away. " Humph! I see—shocked his religious prejudices," said Gruelthorpe; and with his eyes bent upon the pretty figure in the pink gown, Benjamin quitted the cathedral.

CHAPTER IX.

" This is very dull work, John," said Gruelthorpe, who, having dined and drunk his bottle and a half, sat with stretched legs before the tavern fire. " What's to be done, John?"

" Shall I try and borrow you a book, sir? Bless me! there 's one upon that table," and John gave the volume to his master.

" What's this? 'The London Directory,'" and with not another word, Gruelthorpe flung the book upon the floor.

There are men, who left to themselves in an inn at Canterbury, might have found matter for curious thoughts even in " The London Directory." For is it not a register of the social triumphs of man—the *libro d'oro* of civilisation? Pleasant, with the rain pattering at the window, the coals burning briskly, with ease and snugness for our fire-side gods, to glance down the page of " The London Directory." After all, are the leaves so barren? Now, we read the names of living pin-makers, and now, we think of the mitred abbots of the olden day. Now, look we down a long line of traders, workmen, all ministrant to a kingdom's comfort,—and now, look we to the olden time, when the comforts of a nation's hearth were the luxuries only of the rich. A few worked tapestry for barons and knights—our " Directory" gives us hundreds of paper-hangers for the walls of shop-keepers. An earl's floor was strewed with rushes; now, have we carpet-makers for artisans. The light of heaven struggled through holes in cabin walls; now—see our " Directory"—it comes flooding through unwrinkled glass. Even the substantial man must have adjusted his beard at some clear brook; now, may the cobbler shave in a mirror. The riches of India—the spices of the Moluccas—blaze and are fragrant in the pages of the " Directory."

When Ethelbert talked with good Augustine, where did the Kentish ladies get their ivory fans—where did housewives buy their cloves and ginger—where, where did the little boys of Canterbury get their pennyworths of figs? The "Directory" awakens in us recollections of bold discoverers—hardy enterprise—cunning invention—patient toil; and all for the wide family of England, not for the tyrannous and haughty few, made tyrannous by the sense of exclusive enjoyment. The "forked animal" man, cons the page of the "Directory," and sees a thousand merchants offering ten thousand triumphs won by the ingenuity, the skill, the labour, and daring of his kind. He reads the name and abode of a dealer in oil, and he thinks of the bold mariner harpooning the leviathan amidst Polar ice. A "grocer" in the next line sends his thoughts far, far away among the mandarins. A "tallow-chandler,"—and he is riding in the Baltic, that the good folks at home may not go to bed without a candle. Canterbury had its pilgrims—its picturesque processions of shirtless monks, bully knights, and beardless squires; but they are gone,—and seated in the parlour of our host, for the bridle of the churchman,

> "Gingeling in a whistling wind as clere
> And eke, as loud as doth a chapel bell,"—

we hearken to the horn of the London mail—and for "The Golden Legend," we have "The London Directory."

"What will you do, sir?" asked Applejohn, anxious for the amusement of his master.

"I 'spose there's no company to be had, John?" inquired Gruelthorpe despairingly. "I should like to cut the throat of an hour or two with cards. I 'spose there's no gentlemen in the house?"

"Shall I go, sir, and"—

"Go to the devil," replied Gruelthorpe, yawning and flinging himself upon the sofa.

John quitted the apartment; yet, pausing on the outside, he stood considering the means of catering for the pleasures of his master. Never, never did servant cogitate with better intentions. It was in vain; John could decide upon nothing; he therefore descended the stairs, determining to sally forth into the city, to give loose to his fancy, already filled with abbots and abbesses, noble ladies and mailed knights.

On his way to the street-door John unhappily passed a room, wherein he beheld the foreigner he had that morning met in the cathedral, seated with two persons of a somewhat mean appearance, though apparently in familiar intercourse with the great

man himself. There was, however, this marked distinction—the meaner men smoked pipes, the illustrious foreigner whiffed a cigar.

"I—I wisits one of the canons to-morrow; so, Gobye, mind you keep sober," said the foreigner.

"Sober as the town-pump," said Gobye.

"And be wery particklar, Tipit, with that ere wine. You know, when we was last at the duke's"—

At this moment, the door closed, and John Applejohn did not hear what occurred at the duke's. He had, however, heard sufficient, and ran back to his master.

"What does the savage want?" cried Gruelthorpe, as his servant broke upon him.

"If you please, sir, there are some gentlemen down stairs, who I have no doubt will be very happy to join you."

"Are you sure they're gentlemen?" asked the cautious Gruelthorpe.

"Sure of one of 'em; for he wears moustachios, a gold chain, and six rings. But you 've seen him, sir; he was at the Black Prince."

"What! the foreigner?" and the eyes of Benjamin glistened.

"The very person, sir; and I 'm sure he 's a gentleman, sir—for I heard him just now speak of visiting a duke."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Benjamin, and he rose, and approaching the glass, adjusted his scattered curls.

"Shall I say, you 'd like his company, sir?" inquired John.

"Stay. I 'm afraid you can't speak French enough to be understood by him,—for he 's evidently from Paris; I 'm sure of the accent," said the acute Gruelthorpe.

"I think I can make myself understood, sir, in English; for he talks a good deal better than when we heard him," and John, interpreting a nod from his master as consent, ran down stairs, and made his way into the presence of the illustrious foreigner, who, with his friends, John invited in the name of Mr. Benjamin Gruelthorpe, to help over a dull hour with the vivacity and intelligence of their society.

"Shall be too much proud," said the foreigner, tapping his forehead with his fingers.

"Werry 'appy, indeed, to drink a glass o' vine with any gem'man," declared Gobye.

"Is he at de top of de stairs?" inquired the exotic visitor.

"The first floor, sir; I 'll conduct you to him," and John quickly advancing, heard not the friendly warning bestowed by the foreigner upon his two companions.

"Now lads," said the Frenchman, with a pure Parisian accent, "be wide awake, and no gammon."

"I hope, gentlemen, that—'straordinary!"—exclaimed Gruelthorpe, and he stared at the scurvy companions of the foreigner as they swaggered into the apartment.

"My good friends—my varee good friends—my *bones amies*," said the foreigner, introducing Gobye and Tipit.

Gruelthorpe bowed, and proceeded. "I hope, sir, that you will excuse the liberty of a stranger, who finding himself alone in a dull town"—

"'Tis varee dull—varee dull, indeed, to stranger; but to me who know avery bodie upward and downward,"—said the foreigner—

"'Straordinary!" exclaimed Benjamin, and showed his teeth. "You possibly visit the heads of the clergy here?"

"Oh! all of de heads of de church—from de dromedaries"—

"Dromedaries!" cried Gruelthorpe—"'straordinary!"

"Ha! ha! I mean de—de—humph!—de"—and the illustrious foreigner with a desolate look at Gobye and Tipit, continued to tap his forehead.

"Dromedaries," said Mr. Gobye, "you mean prebendairys."

"Ha! ha! 'tis all as one—prebendayries: but you see, I am foreigner."

"A Frenchman, I presume," asked Benjamin.

"Do you parley French?" inquired the foreigner, staring at Gruelthorpe.

"Not—I—that is—not in the slightest," said Benjamin.

"'Tis great pity, for I am French," said the foreigner.

"May I inquire your name?" asked Benjamin.

"My name, sare, is Signor Smugcard, at your service *a jammy*."

"You may go, John; I shall not want you this hour or two: pray be seated, gentlemen. Oh! John, send the waiter to me."

CHAPTER X.

John wandered through the streets of Canterbury; he knew not, cared not, whither. Thinking of Sarah Twopenny, of the roaring sea that might for ever divide him from her—for Mr. Gruelthorpe had resolved to take ship from Dover the next day—of the malicious tongues that had killed his innocent fame, John, unconscious of the distance, strolled far from the inn; and

had made nearly a circuit of the city, when he paused at a monastic ruin. All about him was dark, silent, and desolate. Now John, albeit he had never owned the failing—nay, was hopeful to keep the weakness a secret even from himself—was somewhat superstitious. Again, it might not be impossible that ghosts should walk; and, granting the possibility, he thought Canterbury a very likely place to meet with them. For all he knew, the Black Prince might wander restlessly abroad in search of his stolen blade; Margaret, the Earl of Kent's sister, might take a walk arm-in-arm with her noble husbands, Somerset and Clarence; nay, the shadow of Thomas à Becket himself might roam about the city, gibbering for his golden coffin. As these thoughts stirred in John, the soles of his feet seemed to grow into the earth—the crown of his head became ice—and scarcely breathing, he slowly turned his head from side to side. At this instant, a light blazed through a casement of an isolated part of the ruin. John started at the light, and almost fell to the earth. He then crept close to the window, hearing voices within.

"I tell 'ee, he 's the devil himsel—or his sarvin' man, surelye. I seed un do things, that I thought the floor would ha' opened, and swallowed un clean," said one.

"What did he do?" asked another.

"Do! The Lord ha' mercy on us! I seed un make a half-crown dance like mad in a sugar-basin, and nobody by. More than that, he made port wine run under the ground fro' one pot to 'nother, and not a drop wasted. Then he borrowed a real gold weddin' ring and fired it off with gunpowder; then he biled a egg in a sarcepan, and broke the egg, and took out of it a bird——"

"What! biled?" exclaimed a shrill, female voice.

"No! as raw and as live as any chicken; and who 'd think it?—there was the ring 'bout bird's neck! Well, he gives the ring to the lady, and she looks at it, and puts it on her finger, and smiles at her husband sittin beside her, as much as to say, my love, it 's as right and as tight as ever."

"And did he do nothin' else?" asked one of the company.

"Nothin' else! If I was to tell 'ee what he did, ye 'd all say I was the greatest liar on two legs," cried the narrator.

"No—no—no! Tell us," exclaimed half-a-dozen voices.

"Well, then,—but mind 'tis all true. A good while arter this—and you should ha' seen un make any card o' the pack come strait to him!"

"Come to him," cried one of the listeners. "What! without touching it?"

"Without touching it! Why, he laid the pack down—and

walked away, and then whistled—phewgh !—just so ; and may I die this minute, nay worse than that, may I never taste another drop o' ale, if the Jack of Clubs didn't jump out o' the pack, and follow un about the place for all the world like any dog."

" The Lord ha' mercy on his poor soul ! " said a pitying female voice.

" Soul ! " exclaimed one of the party—" he ha'n't as much soul as ye could lay on a sixpence. Such folks never have. But go on—arter that ? "

" Arter that, he brings out a—a bladder full of magic ; and, just as if he was askin' a neighbour to take a sup o'malt, he puts his hand on his breast, and begs to know if any lady or gen'lman would ha' a little ? He stood and stared at me ; but I gi' un sich a look, I could see it went right through his back-bone. Well, only to think o' the fools of this world ! There was Shankton, the button-maker, near Northgate ; he goes up to un, and takes one bladder, and Bill Mousebite, the cheesemonger, that married his daughter, goes and takes t'other. Shankton sucks at the bladder, and then stands still and stares, and then he bursts out into a laugh, quite scandalous. There he stood, laughin' away, some folks cryin' shame on un, for he ha'n't buried his wife a month, and it warn't decent. Still he stands, laughin' like a cat. Well, Mousebite his son had sucked another bladder, and looked quite fierce to see his own father-in-law grinnin' there like any cow-boy through a collar. Then Mousebite says nothin', but runs straight up to un, and gi's Shankton, wi' his double fist, sich a smash upon the nose, the blood spirted from it like water from a flower-pot ! Down falls Shankton like a bull,—but, would you believe it, wi' the blood pourin' into his open mouth, he kept grinnin' and rollin' with pleasure, whilst Mousebite, lookin' fiercer and fiercer, slid about, and worked his arms like a windmill, and knocked down six men that tried to hold un ? "

" All the black art," said one of the hearers.

" Black enough for Mousebite ; for no sooner does Shankton come to his senses, than he rubs his nose and looks quite penitent, and wants to gi' his son-in-law to a constable for the 'sault. Then the chap that conjured wanted to persuade un 'twas all the magic,—but Shankton buttons his coat in a passion, runs home, takes out his will—he had left every thing to Mousebite and his wife—flings it in fire, smokes sixteen pipes in his rage, and afore he goes to bed, orders his maid to dress and clean hersel' the first thing, for he 'll marry her the next mornin'."

" But he didn't marry her ? " cried a woman.

"No; 'cause why? he was ashamed when he woke to show his nose to the parson. While it was gettin' well, he 'd time to listen to sense; but for Mousebite—he 's cut un off with a half-penny."

"But warn't the blow all through the conjuror?" inquired a hearer.

"That 's what they say to Shankton, but he won't believe it; he swears his son must ha' had his wits about un, or he wouldn't ha' hit so plaguy hard."

"Now, isn't it a shame, that the mayor lets men like the conjuror?"—observed one of the party, who was abruptly stopt by the historian of the magician.

"Men! He 's not a man. He 's the devil himsel—I 'm sure o' it. I could swear it: there 's something about un not like a common conjuror. I ha' seen 'em chew fire, and take pison at fairs—but none like this chap: no, no,—there 's a somethin' about un, that—oh, yes! it 's plain he 's the devil himsel, he 's so much o' the gen'lman."

"Here, Deborah—another mug of ale," cried one of the company, and the words of the speaker went to the heart of John Applejohn, and warmed it.

John, though at first considerably alarmed, had at length listened with more curiosity than fear, becoming assured that the narrator of the works of the wizard, dwelt upon the tricks of some wandering mountebank. The words "a mug of ale" still trembled at John's heartstrings: he felt satisfied that for money there was liquor to be had within; and, as rain began to fall, John Applejohn entered the only habitable portion left by time and fate of the Abbey of St. Augustine, and now made sacred by the destinies to the sale of malt and hops.

John immediately found himself among the company assembled in the ruin; and, ere his ale could be brought him, was tempted to conversation by an elderly man, who, from his voice, John immediately recognised as the person who had so long and so eloquently descanted on the exploits of the conjuror. "'Twill be a wet night, sir," said the man; and John replied that the rain had driven him into the house.

"Ha! that 's the stuff against cold and wet, and wind," observed a lean, thin old man, with a sharp face and a bright eye; and he bustled about the fire, and rubbed his hands, as though, like John, he had just sought shelter from the night. "Deborah, girl," he cried, "a mug of ale; and mind, the abbot. I hope, sir," and the man approached John, and looked inquisitively at his liquor, "I hope, sir, as you 're a stranger,"—

"I am a stranger," said John.

"I hope, sir, that you have the abbot there?" and the man pointed his fore-finger to John's mug. "Nothing less, as a stranger?"

"It 's very good, sir," and John tasted the ale, and smacked his lips. "Very good."

"But not the abbot, I can see," said the old man, and to the surprise of John, he took away the mug, and calling Deborah, began with serious looks and in angry tones to take her to task for the slight put upon a stranger.

"The ale will do very well—very well, indeed, sir," said John, putting out his hand for the mug.

"Excuse me, sir, as a citizen of Canterbury, I have its reputation at heart, sir; I cannot permit a stranger to be deceived in his ale. Perhaps, you will allow me, sir?" and the man inclined the edge of the mug to his mouth, as if awaiting the consent of John to taste the liquor. Then instantly taking a draught, and making a wry face, he seemed to shudder, and gave the half-empty vessel to the girl, telling her in an authoritative tone to take it away, and not in future to impose upon a stranger. The rest of the company remained silent, eyeing Applejohn and his new and disinterested friend.

"Ha! this will do—ha! ha! this is the abbot, sir," said the man, as he poured from the replenished mug of Applejohn. "Look, sir—look,"—and the man held up the glass to the light—"don't you see him, sir?"

"The ale looks very bright," said Applejohn.

"But don't you see the abbot, sir?—look! There, sir—look at his broad, bright, fat face! I can see every feature of him—his cheeks, nose, chin; his winking eyes, look!" and the man held the glass, and gazed upon it, as though really rapt by the vision of a fat monk. "Can't you see him in the ale, sir? What dimples the jolly old fellow has! Ha! ha! look, how he shuts one eye and chuckles at us."

Applejohn stared suspiciously at the man—was he a lunatic? "I—I can see nothing," said John, having stared at the ale, whilst unseen by him the visitors winked and nodded at each other. "Upon my life, sir, I can see nothing," and John put down his glass.

"Ha! sir, that 's because you 're a stranger to Canterbury. Notwithstanding, my service to you," and the man pledged him. "Perhaps, you never heard the story?"

"Never. It must be something odd?" surmised Applejohn.

"Not so odd, as true, sir. Deborah, another mug of ale, for this gentleman. Sir, I have five minutes to spare, and I 'll tell you the story."

"Has it a name, sir?" asked John. "What story?"

"It has a name, sir;" and the speaker, having softened his throat with another draught of ale, began the legend of—"THE ABBOT OF THE ALE-CASK."

"Many hundred years ago, the good King Ethelbert, moved by the pious prayers of the saintly Augustine, built him this monastery for the black monks. And in this very place they lived and revelled, prayed and drank, confessed and carved, until the stormy times of Henry the Eighth, who sent hither his commissioners to take an honest account of the revenue of the abbey, and then to turn the monks out of house and home. In Anno Domini, 1539, their revenues were found to be one thousand, four hundred and thirteen pounds, four shillings—tell me, if I'm wrong, neighbour Stot," said the speaker to the man who had discoursed of the conjuror, and who nodded his willingness to assist the narrator should he stumble—"four shillings and eleven pence halfpenny."

"'Twas a close reckoning," said Applejohn.

"Sir, they were men of conscience, and didn't miss a farthing; men of conscience, sir—Deborah, fill again. They sent the monks packing, as in duty bound. Now, the abbot of that day was called Hilary, the Malster; an excellent churchman, and a pious lover of good ale. It was a sight to behold his resignation when the officers came to drive him and his brethren hence. 'At least, my lord'—it was a lord, wasn't it, Stot, though I forget his name?"—Stot took his pipe from his mouth, and nodded—"'at least, my lord,' said the abbot, 'you will suffer us, if we must leave our darling abbey behind, at least you will permit us to carry away our ale?' And big tears ran down the abbot's cheeks as he looked in the unrelenting face of the commissioner; who not at all moved by the sorrows of the churchman, said, 'the devil a drop,' and the abbot and all the monks shuddered when his lordship swore.—'The devil a drop,' cried his lordship, and the wicked soldiery with their halberds drove the abbot and the brotherhood from the gates; and the good Hilary went beyond the seas, and died of a broken heart, brought on by small wine."

"Is it true, think ye?" asked Applejohn.

"There 's more to come, sir. Deborah, another jug—more to come, sir; isn't there, Stot?" Stot nodded. "'The body of the good Hilary—of Hilary the Malster, lies at Cologne; they show you his tomb, sir, shaped like a hooped tankard, and curiously wreathed with hops cut in white marble. The tomb is shown in the church of—of—but that is no matter; the body of the abbot was buried at Cologne, but his unlaid ghost haunted the abbey of

St. Augustine. Don't be alarmed, sir, but drink;" said the narrator, as Applejohn, shifted on his seat, "drink, sir; for the abbot is the jolliest of spectres."

"And does the abbot still walk?" inquired John.

"Not if the ale be of the true quality—but, you shall hear, sir. I said, his spirit haunted the abbey; it is true. When Queen Elizabeth, on a progress, in the fifteenth year of her reign, slept up stairs"—

"Up stairs!" exclaimed Applejohn.

"That virgin sovereign did not close her eyes for two nights: and what, sir—what think ye kept her gracious majesty wide awake?"

John considered a minute, and then answered—"Perhaps, the fleas."

"No, sir; the affair was hushed up by the privy council, but the ghost of Hilary, the abbot, danced a saraband in the queen's chamber, with a hooped flagon in his hand, and a cask upon his head, crying aloud the while, 'hops!—your highness,—hops!'"

"Is it true, d'ye think?" again asked John.

"A maid of honour confessed the story on her death-bed. Nay, more; when Charles the First and his bride Henrietta lay in the same chamber, the abbot wouldn't let 'em have a bit of quiet, but flourished his flagon, and danced, and still shouted—'hops! your blessed majesties,—hops!'"

"And did they ever get rid of the abbot, or does he still dance?" questioned the credulous Applejohn.

"At length, a brewer took the monastery—an honest man," answered the story-teller. "'Tis said, the first night his mash-tubs and his boilers were brought in, there was heard solemn chaunting at midnight in the vaults."

"But did the abbot never appear again—did he never more cry 'hops?'" asked John.

"He did—and would this very night, if the brewer gave him cause," said he of the legend.

"God bless me!" exclaimed Applejohn, "what cause?"

"Once, 'tis now ten years ago, there had been a great brewing, and either 'twas the dishonesty or the carelessness of the men, but the liquor was marvellously bad. Well, the poor brewer suffered for it; for, at midnight, in came the abbot, and this time with all his monks; and they dragged the poor brewer from his wife clean out of bed, beat him mercilessly with their flagons, and screamed, and shouted, and halloed, 'hops! you rogue—hops!—hops!—hops!'"

"And—and what—what—when the abbot is pleased, does he appear then?" asked John.

"Then," answered the man, "then is he to be seen at midnight sitting astride a barrel of the best ale, with a full flagon in his hand. Should the brewer appear, then does the abbot smile with benignant drunkenness upon him."

"And all this is true?" again inquired Applejohn.

"True as death: and, my friend," added the man, very solemnly, "it teaches us this valuable moral."

"I don't see," said John—"what moral?"

"The moral is as plain as your nose; and tells you, if you would sleep soundly of nights,—never—never to stint your hops."

"What! is the gentleman gone?" said Applejohn, surprised at the sudden disappearance of the narrator.

"Yes; he always goes, when he 's told that tale; and he always does tell it to a stranger," said Stot, grinning.

"A very entertaining man," said Applejohn.

"Aye," answered Stot, "very; and was once the most thrivin' cooper in Kent—a scholard, too; only, you see, he thought anything o' the barrel but making it."

"Does he often come here?" inquired John.

"Yes; he commonly drops in, to look out for visitors; but he do'n't always score so much for 'em as to-night."

"What 's to pay?" asked Applejohn resignedly of Deborah, who on giving in the reckoning did not forget the accompt of the communicative cooper. "A very entertaining man," repeated John, as he discharged the joint bills. "Pray, gentlemen, as I 'm quite a stranger here, which is the direct way to ——?" and John named the inn where his master sojourned.

"I 'm going by the house; will be proud to show you," said a middle-aged man, who from his sleek, plain appearance, John took for a small trader. "Good night, gentlemen," said the man, immediately laying down his pipe, and taking his hat.

"Good night," said John, and he followed the civil stranger from the house. As he crossed the threshold, a volley of laughter burst from the company, whilst more than one of the party cried, "hops! you rogue—hops!—hops!"

"Very agreeable company frequent that house, sir," said our simple hero.

"The only really honest folks in Canterbury," replied his companion, and with the familiarity of an old friend, he took the arm of Applejohn, and walked with him to the door of his inn.

"Your master has been asking for you," said the waiter, as Applejohn entered the house; and, without a moment's delay, John hurried to young Gruelthorpe.

"So! Mr. Applejohn," said Benjamin, "I find you have friends in Canterbury?"

"Friends! sir—not that I know of," answered John. "Bless me!" and he looked round the apartment—"is the company gone, sir?"

"Oh! you'll see them again, no doubt. So, sir, I find you know this conjuror?"

"I—I have heard a good deal of his tricks, to-night. An extraordinary man, sir! I don't much believe in bargains of the sort—but—I hope there's no understanding between him and Beelzebub," observed John, conceiving that his master alluded to the magician of whose necromancy John himself had that night heard such wonders. "I hope not," repeated John.

"Perhaps, you've reason—no doubt, you have; because the bargain may include some of his friends, eh? You have doubtless good reason for your wish."

"None in particular, sir; I only speak as a Christian," said Applejohn.

"There, fellow," and Gruelthorpe flung five sovereigns on the floor—"pick 'em up."

"Certainly, sir," replied the obedient domestic, and immediately gathered the coin from the carpet, and held the money towards his master.

"Take it for your wages, and"—

"I thank ye, sir," interrupted John, "they're not due yet, and with your leave, I wouldn't draw any beforehand."

"You're no longer my servant, fellow," said Gruelthorpe.

"God bless me!" said Applejohn.

"I thought you an honest man, but—but now I know your character—I've found you out."

As Gruelthorpe uttered these words, Applejohn saw himself upon his knees, with the crooked nail in his hand, and old Zweifler gnashing his teeth above him. Yes—it was plain to John that some enemy had recognised him, and informed Mr. Gruelthorpe of the accident in the house of the tailor, whence, a victim to his good intentions, John had been thrust forth, a detected housebreaker.

"Upon my soul, sir!" said John, almost bursting into tears, "what I did, sir, I did for the best; don't, don't cast me off, sir, because of appearances, sir; for, upon my soul and body, sir, I—I meant well."

"Meant well! Never tell me—'twas a regular scheme of robbery," said Gruelthorpe.

"It wasn't, indeed—I know the crooked nail was against me, but for all that"—

"Crooked nail! I"—and as Gruelthorpe spoke, new lights seemed to break upon him—"I shouldn't wonder if in your time you 've been tried for burglary."

"No—never—never tried! As I 'm a living sinner, and an honest man,—never tried!" exclaimed John.

"Well, well, you might have cost me more money—the first loss is the best," said Gruelthorpe, with resignation.

"And have you, indeed, lost anything?" inquired Applejohn with real interest.

"Have I lost anything? I think you took care of that by the company you brought me. You say, sir, you know the conjuror who is here?"

"I heard of him to-night," said Applejohn, ingenuously.

"No doubt—no doubt," answered the sarcastic Gruelthorpe—"and do you recollect a few of his tricks?"

"One especially. I hear he can make the Jack of Clubs walk out of the pack, and follow him about the room like a dog," said John.

"Why, you impudent scoundrel!" shouted Gruelthorpe, "it isn't enough that you bring a mountebank here to rob me, but you must laugh at me afterwards. Begone fellow."

"I bring a mountebank—I rob!" cried Applejohn, and he stared vacantly at his master. "A mountebank!"

"I suppose you can read?" asked the satirical Gruelthorpe.

"Write and cypher," answered the innocent Applejohn.

"Then read that—left by your friend; the friend you brought me, that I mightn't feel lonely. Well, if ever I believe in a foolish face again!" and young Gruelthorpe flung himself upon the sofa. "Read, scoundrel! if your blushes will let you;" and John's master pointed to a piece of paper, lying, with the cards, upon the table.

John took up the paper, and read as follows:—

"'SIGNOR SMUGGARD, ILLUSIONIST,
("'*From all the cities of Europe, and from London in particular,*)
"'*Presents his profound and heartfelt respects to the nobility, gentry, and*
"'*public of*
"'THE ANCIENT CITY OF CANTERBURY,
"'*And begs to state that he will have the honour of exhibiting, for*
"'*three nights only, his hitherto*
"'UNRIVALLED TRICKS!'"

"D—n him!" exclaimed Gruelthorpe; "read on! I—I wonder at your audacity:" and the master stared at the self-possession of his innocent servant.

"'Unrivalled tricks,'" repeated Applejohn.

"Go on, sir!" roared Gruelthorpe—and John obeyed.

"'*He will pick the pocket of any gentleman of the company, and he shall*
"'*never know it.*'"

Gruelthorpe rolled to and fro upon the sofa.

"Bless me! Ar'n't you well, sir?" asked John, approaching his master.

"Read on, sir!" bellowed Gruelthorpe.

"'*He will blow any lady's wedding ring into a million countless pieces,*
"'*and afterwards*
"'TRIUMPHANTLY RESTORE THE FRAGMENTS!
"'*He will put the current half-crown of the realm into a Glass Vase,*
and make it
"'DANCE ITSELF INTO LITTLE SIXPENCES!
"'*He will tell any lady's thoughts!*
"'BUT,—
"'*Upon the honour of a gentleman,*
"'*Pledges himself that they shall be eternally buried with him*
"'IF AT ALL DELICATE!'

"No man could do less," said Applejohn.

"I wonder at your assurance," cried Gruelthorpe, "but go on."

"'*The Signor will call any card from the pack into his hand, at any*
"'*distance, and from anybody?*'"

"Oh! you scoundrel," exclaimed Gruelthorpe; "but finish it."

"'SIGNOR SMUGGARD *might set forth a thousand illusions performed by*
"'*him; but it is trusted that it will be an overwhelming testimony*
"'*of his extraordinary powers, when he states that his*
"*Sleight of hand, and tricks of Legerdemain*
"'*Have obtained for him the approbation of the best judges; among whom*
"'*he is proud to number*
"'ALL THE CROWNED HEADS OF EUROPE!
"'SIGNOR SMUGGARD *will administer the Laughing Gas to the curious*
"'*in risibility.*
"'*Lessons in Sleight of Hand and Tricks in general, given by the Signor.*
"*Gentlemen of the Church and the Bar attended in private.*
"'N.B.—No Dissenter need apply.'"

John, having finished a perusal of the bill, looked wonderingly in the face of his master. "Has the conjuror been here, sir?"

"Ere John had put the whole question, his master leapt from the couch—"Why," he exclaimed, "you—you brazen rascal!"

"What's the matter? What have I done?" asked John.

"Done! didn't you bring that scoundrel and his accomplices here?"

"You were alone and dull sir, and wanted company, and I thought the foreign gentleman,"——

"Foreign gentleman! a conjuror from Shoreditch!—Look there!" and Gruelthorpe pointed to a pack of cards scattered about the floor.

"What! did he get you to play at cards, sir?" inquired John.

"A little loo—only a little loo," muttered Gruelthorpe, biting his fingers.

"Loo! What! loo with a conjuror, if he is a conjuror? But I took him for a count at least. Loo with him? Why, sir, you see he can bring any card from the pack. Play at loo with a man who can make the Jack of Clubs follow him like a dog? Play at"——

John was proceeding in his oblique censure of his master, when Gruelthorpe suddenly caught him by the shoulders, swung him round, and with arms and foot thrust him out at the door.

"There must be something wrong," thought John, "perhaps, he has lost a large sum of money; still, when his passion is over, he can't blame me—no, that's impossible: because, whatever has happened, I did all for the best. However badly things may have fallen out, I meant well," and with this barren consolation John crept to his room, resolving not again to appear before his master until summoned. "He'll forget it in the morning," was the belief of John, who, having waited up until midnight went, tranquil in his sense of innocence, to bed.

Long ere John was wrapt in sleep, his unforgiving master was travelling post to Dover.

We, however, should do injustice to the generous spirit of Signor Smugcard, if we concluded this chapter without registering his act of courtesy towards Gruelthorpe. That gentleman had in the best possible temper lost a hundred and fifty pounds to the Signor and his friends, and was still in ignorance of the professional abilities of his antagonists.

"There, I think that will do, gentlemen," said Gruelthorpe, flinging down the cards.

"You vill play not no more at all?" asked the Signor, with truly a winning smile.

"No—not to night; I don't care much for cards, but they help over a dull hour," remarked Benjamin.

"You are tout certain, varie quite sure you vill play not no more?" inquired the Signor for the second time.

"No—no—another time, should we meet, I may be very happy."

"Ha! sare," and the Signor heaved a sigh, and looked with melting eyes upon Benjamin Gruelthorpe—"dis vorld is so fool, so entire fool of tings dat are no sure, maybe we sall nayvere meet agane."

"May be," said Benjamin, with proper resignation.

"In dat case, are you tout certain, varie quite sure you vill play not no more?" asked the Signor for the third time.

"Not to-night," said Gruelthorpe firmly, "not to-night."

"Den, sare, I vish you much good-night; I have been much delight vid your company; and I should tink varie littel of meself, if I did not offer you a place for my illusions."

"Illusions!" exclaimed Gruelthorpe. "What illusions?"

"Gobye," said the Signor, "give an annonce—a bill;"—and Mr. Gobye took a roll of at least two hundred of those documents from his coat-pocket, and carefully blowing the edges to separate them, put into the hand of Gruelthorpe a bill of entertaiment, of which we have already given a copy. At the same moment, Signor Smugcard approached Gruelthorpe, and bowing low, presented him with two free tickets for the exhibition, saying—"One for yourself—and one for ladie." The tickets delivered into the paralysed hand of Gruelthorpe, the Signor Smugcard walked across the carpet to the door as if he trod upon the thinnest sheet of ice, and then, making his lowest bow, disappeared, followed by his companions—for he disavowed all accessaries—Gobye and Tipit.

Benjamin Gruelthorpe glanced at the bill, and then at the tickets—he had played at loo with a conjuror! He rang the bell with his best violence, and inquired for his servant. At that moment John Applejohn entered the house, and in a few seconds stood in the presence of his enraged master, when the scene we have already described, was acted between them.

CHAPTER XI.

"Depend upon it, there must be some mistake," said Applejohn in the morning, when informed of the departure of his master by the waiter. "He can't have left me behind!"

"That 's for you to settle with yourself—here, it seems, you are," said the waiter.

"I did all for the best," said John, "I meant well—time will show, I meant well;" and thus, satisfied with his good intentions, John sat down to breakfast. "If I starve for it, I can't help it,"

talked John to himself, cutting at a large flank of beef; "I meant well—and good intentions"—here John buttered his roll inch-thick,—"good intentions will sweeten dry bread."

"I suppose, my man, your master will give you a character?" asked the waiter of John, whilst yet at his breakfast.

"He couldn't do less," said our hero, "I've done nothing wrong—I wasn't to tell a conjuror from another man—I meant well."

"There 's a gentleman put up here last night from Dover; he's been speaking to master; he wants a servant."

John rose from the table, "where is he?"

After some words with the landlord, upon whom the simplicity of our hero had had a very favourable effect, John was ordered to the presence.

The gentleman was a thin, tall, sallow young man, with a sharp face buried in a profusion of black hair, whilst his cheeks and throat were fairly bandaged with whiskers. He was in a morning-gown of bright blue damask, tied about the girdle with gold cords, enriched with heavy tassels of the same material. His shirt collar was thrown back; and in his whole air and manner there was to John something inexpressibly impressive and elegant.

"Oh! ha!" said the gentleman, and he picked his teeth and looked at our hero.

"I—I 've understood, sir, that you—you want a servant?" ventured John.

"Well? what then?" drawled the man in damask.

"I—I want a master," said Applejohn.

"Well—ha!—yes—you may follow me to London. I hav'n't time just now to look into your character—and by the way, I think character altogether a d—d imposition. I suppose any rascal can get one for half-a-crown? Eh?"

"I don't know the price, sir—I never went to market," said John.

"Oh, yes—yes; as for character, any scoundrel can give a brother scoundrel a lift. I had a fellow, a groom, Mr. Rummer," and the young gentleman addressed the landlord, who had introduced John, "yes, a groom; well, he had a character signed I do believe by half the bench of bishops: would you believe it,—the fellow broke open my dressing-case, stole five hundred pounds in bank-notes, besides a miniature set with the superbest diamonds?"

"Dear me! sir," said Mr. Rummer, "a very heavy loss."

"Oh! d—n the money; 'twas the miniature that—by the way, Mr. Rummer, you remember that separation in high life?"

"I—I think I"—stammered Rummer.

"Oh yes! you must recollect it; all brought on by that

confounded miniature. The thief was taken, the portrait was recognised, the exposure was inevitable: there was a meeting of the families, and—ah! poor thing, she 's now in Wales."

"And didn't you punish the thief, sir?" inquired the landlord —"didn't you make an example?"

"D—n examples! There again 's the greatest mistake—as if any body was ever the better for example! Though certainly, I think I should have had the fellow hanged, only as the affair happened just before I started for the county,"—

"Started for the county! I hope you succeeded?" said the landlord.

"No, Mr. Rummer, no: bribery and threats, sir; bribery and threats. I lost the election, sir; so you see I might as well have hanged the scoundrel after all."

"It was very liberal of you."

"D—n liberality!" said the fine young man—"in fact, Mr. Rummer, d—n every thing."

"To be sure, sir," assented Mr. Rummer.

"Servants," exclaimed the young gentleman, fixing his eyes upon Applejohn, "are the greatest villains that ever chewed. I've been ruined by 'em, Mr. Rummer; that is, if I could have been ruined. You recollect that I was about to be married to Lady Barbara?"

"I—I—oh, yes! I heard something of it," said the obliging landlord.

"Something of it! Settlement and every thing signed. Well, I had written a little poem; I'm afraid it has somehow or the other got into print—it 's a trifle. I flung it off at the opera, standing one night in Fop's Alley, looking at Lady Barbara opposite; we'd had a little tiff that morning. I dare say, you never met with the poem? it begins—tut! I never—no I never can remember my own lines. Yes, I have it—it begins—

'Fare thee well, and if for ever,
Still for ever fare thee well.'"

"I think, sir, I can show you where those lines are in print," said the well-meaning Applejohn.

"When I need you for my librarian, I'll inform you," said the young gentleman, darting a withering look at John.

"But about Lady Barbara, sir?" said Mr. Rummer, who seemed to pay the greatest deference to his guest.

"Well, lovers' quarrels, you know, Mr. Rummer,—there 's a proverb, I forget it, about 'em. Lady Barbara insisted upon my writing the lines in her album—d—n writing!"—and here the

young gentleman raised his voice, and spoke with considerable fervour—"and oh! particularly d—n all albums!"

"My daughter has one," said Mr. Rummer.

"So had Betty, our housemaid," observed Applejohn; who, but for his modesty, might have stated that he had himself, ere his expulsion from the house of Mr. Zweifler, contributed to the volume.

The young gentleman flung another look upon John—"Lady Barbara insisted: I gave the album to my other scoundrel of a servant to take to my hotel. The ruffian went to some low pot-house; was, for the basest purposes, made infamously drunk, and the album of Lady Barbara—a volume which the greatest names of Europe had adorned, a book in which the greatest authors had writ, in which the finest painters, nay, in which my dear friend, Mr. Dolce"—

"Does he know Mr. Dolce?" asked John of himself, and again he thought of the crooked nail.

"You have heard of Mr. Dolce, the artist, eh, Rummer?" asked the young gentleman.

"His name hasn't yet travelled into these parts," said the innkeeper.

"Wonderful artist! has the best cut coat in London;" said the young gentleman. "Well, my ruffian of a servant—d—n all servants!—left the book at the pot-house, while he himself was brought to my hotel in a beastly state of inebriety."

"His stomach out of order, perhaps?" suggested the charitable Applejohn.

Again the young gentleman frowned. "But, sir, what became of the book?" asked the landlord.

"Unfortunately," said the man in damask, "Lady Barbara's name was in it. Well, the next day 'twas sent to her mansion, contributed to by all the atrocious miscreants, the hackney-coachmen and link-boys, the previous night assembled at the Bag o' Nails. To be brief, Mr. Rummer; her lady mother, the Duchess—(and by the way, that excellent woman had the strangest questions put to her by the new contributors to the album,)—forbade me the house, and—and it 's a long story, but—oh! d—n all servants—and certainly d—n all albums!"

"I hope, sir," said Applejohn, "if you think well enough of me to give me a trial, I shall be found honest and diligent? One thing, I will answer for, sir; you may be always sure that I shall mean well."

"I think you may venture upon him, sir," said the landlord, resolved to assist John.

"Well, you may come with me to London—d—n London!—

must go back to it, though—ha! Paris is the only place for a gentleman. Well," and the hero in damask stared at John, "as Mr. Rummer seems your friend, you may consider yourself my animal."

"Thank you, sir. You shall find me everything you wish—thank you, sir," and the delighted Applejohn bowed himself from the apartment, followed by the landlord. "Pray, what 's my master's name?" asked John.

"Cramlington," answered Mr. Rummer; "he's an excellent customer of mine, and so I keep friends with him; that is, I listen to him. I believe he sees the first company in town. You 're in luck, I can tell you."

To say the truth, John was in no way displeased at the accident which had prevented his expatriation. In quitting England, he felt that he should have left Sarah Twopenny for ever: returning to London, hope whispered him that the mistake under which he had suffered might be cleared up, that he who was the most temperate of the sons of men would not continue to carry about with him the punishment of a drunkard, that—that—and then the incident of the crooked nail made him despair anew!

The next day, John attended his master to town. Mr. Cramlington inhabited chambers in, it is enough to say, the most fashionable part of the metropolis. The duties of John were particularly easy, inasmuch as he was left to himself the greater part of the day, his master generally quitting home early in the morning, and not returning until the evening, when he usually dressed for a dinner-party or the opera. Mr. Cramlington was really an eccentric person. In the morning he quitted his chambers attired in the sober suit of a merchant: gold chains, rings, brooches, all set aside; nay, his superb head of black hair, together with his voluminous jetty whiskers, reposed upon his dressing-table until night, their owner sallying forth in a light, natural crop, with his cheeks as bare as his palm. No two persons could be more dissimilar than Henry Cramlington in the morning and Henry Cramlington at night.

"The fact is, you see, John," said Cramlington, "I wore this wig and these whiskers for a frolic at a masquerade; and, as there I happened to fascinate a certain lady, who may one day be your mistress, John, I am fearful that a change to a state of nature on my part, might injure me in her good opinion."

John felt particularly flattered by this proof of his master's confidence; and thereupon ventured to observe that he thought Mr. Cramlington's fears entirely groundless.

"No—no—John; I know more of these things than you can possibly do: I shall keep the secret until I 'm married."

"Why, sir," said the conscientious Applejohn, "you 'd never enter into the holy state of matrimony under false appearances? Lead a woman with sham hair and whiskers to the altar, and she not know it! Pardon me, sir, but I don't like deceit in wedlock."

"Pooh! pooh! it 's done every day, John. I wouldn't divulge before marriage for the world," said Cramlington, with emphasis.

"I think, sir—I must say it—providing that the lady really and truly loves you, I think you wrong your other good gifts, sir, to rely too much upon the wig and whiskers."

"Not at all: you know nothing about it, John; d—n me! you have no notion of the women who have fallen victims to the curling-irons."

"Well, sir, to be sure," and John scarcely suppressed a sigh as he thought of Sarah Twopenny, "to be sure, they are strange animals. One doesn't know what will please 'em. And yet, sir, I must say it—it 's too bad to use deceit, when nature 's made us the strongest."

"Strongest! Why, we 're fools to 'em—babies—nincompoops—d—n me!" said Cramlington.

"You don't say it, sir?" cried Applejohn. "What! all women?—All?"

"All. They all love—d—n me!—to cheat, trick, and perplex us. Ha! that sentiment brings to my mind a poem I once wrote upon the sex. There were two rather good lines in it—let me see— d—n it! never can recollect my own poetry. Now, I have it:—

> "'Some men to bus'ness—some to pleasure take,
> But ev'ry woman is at heart a rake.'"

"That 's hitting 'em hard, sir," said Cramlington's compassionate valet.

"Hang 'em!" cried the merciless poet, "we can't hit 'em too hard."

"And yet, sir, abuse 'em as we may," said Applejohn, "for all their tricks, sir, there 's a time when there 's nothing like 'em. When sickness comes, sir, or trouble, or"—

"Very true, John; I hope I 'm not insensible to the good they have. No! though I have, in my time, told the baggages some hard truths, I trust, as I 've shown in another poem—I wrote it after a fever brought on by pine-apples—I trust, as I 've said in that little poem, I"—

"What did you say, sir—if I may be so bold, sir—what?" asked John impatiently.

"No matter—I 've quite forgot it. I never can remember my own lines: other men's verse sticks to my brains like birdlime, but I never— d—n me !—can remember my own. Yes—now I apprehend; my poem begins somehow thus—

> "'Oh! woman, in our hours of ease,
> Uncertain, coy, and hard to please;
> But when pale sickness wrings the brow,
> A ministering angel thou!'"

"Beautiful!" cried John—"beautiful!"

"There 's a good deal more of it," observed Cramlington, "but I 've told you, I never— d—n me !—can remember my own lines."

From the foregoing dialogue the reader must be aware of the courteous familiarity vouchsafed by the master to the man. Indeed, there was scarcely a day, that Cramlington would not, for the especial delight and improvement of his servant, illustrate the most common topic by short quotations from long poems, written by the speaker, as he would sigh and say, in happier hours. Nay, such an opinion had Cramlington of the natural taste of Applejohn, that he would condescend to sing to him *Vivi tu*, and then gather the judgment of his valet on the performance.

"That 's precisely," Cramlington would say, when he had howled the melody, "that 's precisely as my friend Ivanoff does it."

"And does he get money by it?" asked Applejohn wonderingly.

"Money! thousands," said Cramlington. "Money! D—n me!"

"God bless me!" said Applejohn; "well, lottery luck is nothing to the luck of some people."

"All men have luck, John, if they have but sense enough to make use of it. Egad! that reminds me of a sentiment, tolerably expressed I think in a little sketchy drama I once wrote."

"What! a play, sir?" asked John.

"Yes—but I never would consent to have it acted. The lines are, I think—yes, they run thus:—

> "'There is a tide in the affairs of men,
> Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune.'

I forget the rest—but 'twas all in the same strain, only a good deal better."

One morning, Mr. Cramlington was more than usually familiar with his domestic. As he sat late at breakfast—he had been at four parties the previous evening, and had not returned home until daylight—he astonished and gratified John by narrating the many conquests he had made within the last eighteen

hours; never did master paint himself so great a hero to his valet.

"But, hang it! it's no use, John—I feel my time is come," said the victorious Cramlington. "Quite sure—d—n me!"

"La! sir," said the simple Applejohn, "I never saw you look better."

"He! he! I mean—plague on't! why wasn't I born a Turk?—I can only marry one, and—but what I was about to say, John, is this; as I may leave town at five minutes' notice, have every thing in readiness for my journey."

"Certainly, sir. Shall you go far?" asked John.

"To Scotland, of course," said Cramlington. "Scotland,—d—n me!"

"May I be so bold as to ask, sir—is it pressing business, sir?" inquired John.

"Business and pleasure combined," replied the master, "I—I run off with an heiress, John,— d—n me!"

"Run off? What! relations won't consent, sir?"

"Sha'n't ask 'em—sha'n't ask 'em, John; there's always some difficulty— d—n me!—with relations; as I said in one of my early verses,—

"'The course of true love never did run smooth.'"

"You never said a truer thing, sir," remarked Applejohn, heaving a deep sigh. "I don't know how it is, sir, but we no sooner love any thing, or get any thing to love us, than something always happens."

"Hallo! John,—d—n me!—you 've been reading my new manuscript poem—I didn't know I had left it about."

"Not I, indeed, sir," asseverated John, "I wouldn't be guilty of such a thing, sir."

"Oh! I 'm not angry; but you must have read it—for I have the very same thought, rather prettily turned too. As I only put it to paper last week, I recollect it very well. It begins—

"'I never reared a young gazelle,'"

"What 's a gazelle, sir?" asked John.

"A *species* of goat, John," answered Cramlington, and proceeded—

"'I never reared a young gazelle,
To glad me with its soft black eye,
But when it knew and loved me well,
Was sure to die.'"

"It always happened to my father with his bullfinches, sir," said Applejohn, "the best piper was always the shortest liver."

"Too often the fate of us young poets, d—n me!" cried Cramlington. "However, help me to dress, John—for I 've much to do abroad; and mind, in case I may want them, have my trunks ready at a minute's notice."

Mr. Cramlington was assisted by his valet into his sober suit, and in his own light hair and with his natural, naked cheeks, sallied from his chambers, secure in his present appearance from recognition by any of the five hundred individuals among whom he the last night lounged and tittered. "I shall be home at seven to dress, John," were the departing words of the master.

"He 's a very agreeable man, and then, so very clever," thought John, "who 'd have thought he could do such pretty verses?" And Applejohn, musing on the many virtues and talents of his master, set himself to arrange the sumptuous decorations for the night. In this important pursuit, the raven wig and whiskers of the beau Cramlington fell into the hands of Applejohn, who thereupon began to reflect on the uncertain and curious dispositions of the sex, thinking many deep things, too deep we presume, for expression; for with the wig and whiskers in his hand, he looked as gravely as Hamlet gazing on the skull, yet said nothing. John turned his head, and saw his features in a glass. we know not what process of thought tempted him to the trial, or whether indeed he thought at all of the matter, but in a second he had placed the wig upon his head, the whiskers at his cheeks, and stood and gazed in the mirror an altered man. He was so changed, his dearest creditor, had he had one, would not have known him.

John sat in his master's easy chair, and with his head in his hand, first fell into profound meditation, and then sank into deep sleep. He had for three nights sat up late for Mr. Cramlington, and was worn with the service. John had sweetly snored away an hour, when he was awakened by a loud knocking at the chamber door. Forgetful of the borrowed wig and whiskers, John yawned, stretched himself, and slowly rose to attend the summons. He opened the door, and almost fell prostrate when he beheld the terrible countenance of his late master, Karl Zweifler, the tailor. The old man, without the slightest ceremony, walked into the centre of the apartment, and turning himself round, surveyed at his leisure the appointments about him. John, tongue-tied with fear and shame, spoke not a syllable.

"Vere is your master, eh?" asked old Zweifler.

"Out," answered John, "quite out, sir."

The tailor turned fiercely round upon John, and exclaiming "teef," "liar," stalked into the bed-chamber of Mr. Cramlington.

Having opened the bed-curtains, and looked in every corner of the apartment, Zweifler grinned in the face of John, and said—"You vill please to tell me de name of de pig villain."

"The name of my master, sir?" inquired John; and the old man grunted an affirmative. "Cramlington, sir."

"Oh! mein Gott!" groaned old Zweifler, "Gramlindon!"

"No, sir; Cramlington," was the correction of John; "Cramlington."

"Damn villain!" shouted old Zweifler, "I said Gramlindon. Now, you will blease to write me dat ubon a pit of baper—write me down de name of dat teef your master—write Gramlindon."

"I write it, sir?—I—the truth is, sir," and John was about to excuse himself, when old Zweifler seized him by the collar; again did the knuckles of the tailor, fixed in John's jugular, send an indescribable coldness to his heart. John resigned himself to the old man, who led him to a table, whereon lay pen, ink, and paper. "If you blease," said Zweifler, presenting the pen to John, and addressing him with the most ferocious politeness, "if you blease, you damn villain, to write de name of dat pig teef, your master. Gramlindon! Mein Gott!—Gramlindon," the old man ejaculated in astonishment and horror. "Write," Zweifler bellowed: and in his best round hand, considering the circumstances of intimidation, John penned "Cramlington."

The old man took up the paper, and gnashing his teeth, shouted—"Mein Gott! it is Gramlindon."

At this moment, a smart, quick knock was heard at the door, and the old man threw his hands above his head, and roared "Ha! ha! berhaps dis is Gramlindon. Open—you teef, open," he exclaimed to John, who mutely obeyed the order, when a man in a rough coat and low glazed hat, walked in.

"All right, isn't it," asked the man, "Mister Cramlington's?"

"Yes," answered John, and "quite right," said old Zweifler, making a great effort to maintain his composure.

"Have you any business with my master?" asked John.

"I believe you—I've brought him a reg'lar jewel," said the man, and he seated himself with an air of conscious importance.

"He puys jewels!" exclaimed Zweifler, with a groan. "Berhaps, diamonds. Is it baid for?" he inquired of the newcomer.

"That's not my affair," said the man, "but I should think my master knows his customer or he wouldn't trust him with such an article. Old fellow," and the stranger addressed himself to John, "have you anything to drink?"

"Nothing," said John.

"Worse than an uninhabited island, for all it 's so fine then," said the man, looking round the room.

"But what have you brought my master?" asked John, old Zweifler staring silently at the new-comer.

"'Tisn't to be matched in all the town, I can tell ye, old chap," replied the man, "if it is, my name 's not Bub. I say, your master 's going to be married, isn't he?"—Zweifler groaned—"what 's the matter, old un?"

"But is that your business?" inquired John, "what can you have to do with my master's marriage?"

"You wouldn't ask that, if you know'd what was in my pocket," replied Mr. Bub, with a nod and a wink.

"Berhaps," said Zweifler, trying hard to be polite, "berhaps, sir, it 's the marriage zettlement?"

"I should think so; 'nough to bind any woman to a man for life. I tell 'ee, there isn't the fellow to't in the wide world; and I ought to know something, for I've been in the trade since I could stand upon one leg," asserted Mr. Bub. "Yes, I'm sure when gen'lmen does as Mr. Cramlington does, they means marriage downright, and no inweigling. She 's such a beautiful creature!"

"Is she?" asked Zweifler, "you're sure, eh?—beautiful?"

"Beautiful! your whiskers black as they are," said Bub, slapping John on the shoulder, "your whiskers"—

"My whiskers!" exclaimed John, and catching his features in the glass, he saw his master's property upon his own face, and felt deep gratitude for the accident that had disguised him from the eyes of old Zweifler.

"Black as they are, your whiskers are white to her," said Bub.

"Black!" exclaimed Zweifler.

"And ears," said Mr. Bub, measuring about eight inches from his fingers, "ears that long."

"Mein Gott!" said Zweifler. "Where does she come from?"

"Purest breed in the world; takes the water like a duck," avowed Bub.

"Mein friend," exclaimed Zweifler, "you are a teef—a damn teef."

"Did a little once in that way when young, and not ashamed to own it," said the ingenuous Bub, "but we don't call it stealing, we don't: to pick a pocket 's a robbery if you like; but to steal a dog is only too much humanity for animals."

"A dog! what—what do you mean?" exclaimed Applejohn.

"Mean! why, look here; that 's what I mean," and Mr. Bub, with a triumphant countenance, drew from his coat-pocket a very diminutive and very beautiful black-and-tan spaniel bitch.

"There—look at 'em," he cried, displaying her ears. "Worth fifty pounds apiece, the ears alone," said Mr. Bub.

"You seem to make very much of the beast," remarked Applejohn.

"Make much? Why there's repitation for all trades," answered Mr. Bub. "I tell 'ee, I'm almost as fond of that little spannel bitch, as if she was my own flesh and blood."

"Gott forgive ye," cried old Zweifler, "you damn teef!"

"La! bless your heart, if you was to see what I see with these little things and them as owns 'em, you'd think something better of your fellow creaturs for their kindness. Why, there's many an old lady as I know, as treats her dogs and her birds as if they was the best of her."

"Oh lord!" groaned Zweifler.

"Bless you! I can feel all their pulses through their animals," said Mr. Bub. "You see, they comes to the Gardens," by this, it was evident that the speaker was attached to some great menagerie, "they comes to the gardens, and sometimes they just gives me a nod and nothing more, and then I know all's well at home. But when a dowager comes smiling up to me, and says 'Good day, Mr. Bub,' why then, 'Oh, oh!' I cries to myself, for I know right well her spannel's caught the 'stemper, or parrot's got the pip. Bless your hearts! people in our line o' life see a good deal o' human natur," said Mr. Bub.

"And very odd parts of it too," said Applejohn, interested by the manner and matter of the speaker.

"I believe ye," said Bub, "animals, the lower animals, as we people of science call 'em, does away with all distinctions. For instance, when a duke takes to stuffing,"—

"What do you mean by stuffing?" asked Applejohn.

"Stuffing skins of birds and beasts," said Bub, "to make 'em look like life; why then, in that case, he's no more than a common man. There's two or three dukes of my acquaintance think they knows a good deal of stuffing, that's what I call the practical science of the matter: they knows nothing about it, though sometimes I humour 'em."

"You find it to your advantage, no doubt?" observed John.

"Yes; it tells in for a man better than always speaking the dry truth: but sometimes I can't help having a fling. Why, there's the duke of ——, but I won't mention his name, 'cause I promised him I wouldn't. Well, I went on an invite to his place to see a sick ostrich of his; a carpenter had left his basket of tools in the way, and there was a hammer and six chisels missing, and the bird getting melancholy, suspicions fell upon him. To make short, we recovered the tools and the ostrich too. But I

was going to say, that his grace takes me all round his museum —*his* museum, after ours!—and, proud as a peacock with two tails, he would show me all the birds stuffed and set up with his own hands. In a man's own house, you know, it 's only polite to humour him a bit; so whenever he asked, 'What do you think o' that flamingo, Mr. Bub?' I says, 'Very well stuffed, your grace;' and 'What do you think of that Solan goose, Mr. Bub?' I answers, 'You stuff a goose better than any man in the kingdom, my lord duke;' and so on, he being as I could see, mightily tickled with my good word. Well, we went round fifty specimens, and as he was only a duke, and not a bird-stuffer by birth, I did all I could to encourage him. Why should we feel envy at any body? However, one can't always go against one's conscience; so when we had been nearly all round the museum, his grace stops sudden before a bird — did you ever see a cockatoo?"

"Yes," answered Applejohn. "Well, his grace stops?"

"His grace stops, and looking hard at me, he says, 'There, Mr. Bub—I think that 's natur itself. It looks alive—hopping on the twig, eh, Mr. Bub?' Now, I 'd do anything for his grace, but I see he was getting too conceited. It was no more like the shape or action of a cockatoo, than—however, I looks at the bird, and I shakes my head. 'What!' says his grace, 'what 's the matter?' Then I looks very steadily at him, and I says, 'My lord duke, you'll pardon what I 'm going to say?' and he says, 'Certainly.' 'Well then, my lord duke,' says I, 'don't you in the house of lords—you 'll forgive me what I 'm going to say—don't you in the house of lords sometimes vote by proxy?' 'I do,' says the duke. 'Then, your grace,' says I, 'for the time to come, I 'd advise you to stuff cockatoos by proxy too.'"

"But, mein freind," said Zweifler, who had for some minutes employed himself in the minute inspection of the costly articles to be found in the chamber, "mein freind—how much vill dat damn buppy cost?"

"Cheap at eighty guineas, sir; cheap at"—Mr. Bub was suddenly interrupted by the violence of the old man; for he gave utterance to a yell—raised his arms—clenched his fists at the unconscious spaniel, and, incapable of words, rushed from the place. Mr. Bub, after a moment's pause, indulged himself with a long whistle.

"He doesn't know what he 's about," cried Applejohn, considerably relieved by Zweifler's disappearance. "The fact is, I—I think he 's my master's tailor."

"That 's enough," observed the sagacious Bub; "no wonder, poor gentleman, that it makes him mad to see so much

money wasted upon puppies, when he, perhaps, gets so little himself, eh?"

"But do you really think the dog will cost eighty guineas?" inquired John.

"I know that Lady Lucina—ah! she 's dead now, she was the woman for science—although her ladyship was one of the oldest fellows,"—

"Her ladyship, a fellow!" exclaimed Applejohn.

"A fellow of our society—she paid eighty-five for a spannel with a tail that had nothing of the promise of a tail about it that this has. Ha! she was the woman for science. She took as much interest in the monkies as if they was her own family. I may say, she quite lived in the Gardens. There wasn't a Muscovy duck hatched that she didn't book it; kept the young emews' birth-days; and when the first kangaroo was born, why, in honour of science, she give a grand dinner-party to all the fellows. She *was* a woman."

"And dead, eh?" said John.

"Caught her death, watching the sick lion without clogs last hard winter. I give her a hint what would happen, but there was no getting her from the den; she insisted, as she said, upon seeing the last of what she called 'the lordly brute.' But I say, isn't this dry work?" asked Mr. Bub.

"I 'm not thirsty, myself," said Applejohn, "but I should very much like us to meet again," observed Applejohn, anxious to extend an enlightened connexion.

"First business, then pleasure," said Mr. Bub. "Come, give me your fist to this," and Bub wrote the following receipt for the signature of John:—"*Reseaved of mr. Bub a Spannel Bittch*," to which John subjoined, "JOHN APPLEJOHN."

"John Applejohn," and Bub paused when he had read the signature. "If I was you, I should never think of changing that name—you 'll never get such a droll one again."

"I 'm the last of the family," said John; "the Applejohns go out with me."

"But I shouldn't let 'em, you know—I should graft," said Bub.

"What do you mean?" asked our simple hero; and then the metaphor of Bub revealed itself to John, who sighed as he thought of Sarah Twopenny. "No; that 's impossible," he said; "but I really should like us to meet again."

"Then come to the Gardens to-night at eight; and, as you seem a decent fellow, I 'll take you to my society," said Bub.

Applejohn seized the speaker by the hand, and promised punctuality.

"Clever fellows there,—men who know life and science; all of 'em first-rate chaps. I 'm the chairman. Mind, eight, and no mistake," and Mr. Bub, carefully depositing the receipt for the spaniel in his waistcoat pocket, took his leave.

CHAPTER XII.

Early in the evening, Mr. Cramlington came home to dress. He was absorbed in admiration of the spaniel, destined that night to become the property of a lady who will in due time appear upon our page, when he was disturbed by a hurried knocking at the door. "John, my wig!" exclaimed Cramlington, and rushed into the inner room to seize that elegant disguiser, John, after a necessary delay, attending the clamorous summons. "Master 's at home," cried a gentleman, very confidently, and dashed into the room; almost at the same instant, Cramlington issued from the inner chamber, in his satin morning-gown, and with hair and whiskers black as death.

"Ha! ha! my dear lord Slap, how are you? Eh! what 's the matter?" asked Cramlington, seeing his lordship's arm in a sling.

"Nothing—smashed my arm last night, but had capital fun. Ha! ha!" and his lordship flung himself down in the easy chair of his host. He was, however, no sooner down than up again—the spaniel with swollen eye-balls and angry teeth snapping at the offending part of his lordship, which falling heavily upon the fragile creature lying in the chair, had almost rendered it a fit subject for the museum of the nameless duke, distinguished by the praise of Mr. Bub.

"Gracious heavens! Slap," exclaimed Cramlington, rushing with open arms to the flattened spaniel.

"D—n the dog! Why, the devil do you litter in your chairs?" cried his lordship, and catching the dog by its tail of great promise, the young peer flung the animal to the other end of the room, Applejohn providentially catching the beast as it was in full speed towards a mirror.

"My dear lord," cried Cramlington, and then added, but very deferentially—"d—n me!"

"Suppose I was bit, eh? Good joke for the newspapers, eh?"—cried his lordship.

"I hope, my dear Slap, you 're not hurt; it is but a pup, Slap," said Cramlington.

"Nothing hurts me," exclaimed his lordship, "blood—true blood will stand anything."

"But what 's the matter with your arm ?" inquired Cramlington, with great concern.

"Such rare fun last night—never had such glorious fun ! Why, wer'n't you with us ? Ha! ha ! such fun ! " and his lordship flung himself back in the chair, and shouted with laughter.

Cramlington, staring with astonishment at the opened and injured jaws of nobility, exclaimed—"My dear Slap—what 's the matter with your teeth ?"

"Had three knocked out last night—here they are though," and his lordship produced three teeth, two single and one double, from his waistcoat-pocket : "brought 'em off safe out of the gutter, and, more than that, left the field with the pump-handle —such fun ! "

"Pump-handle!" exclaimed Cramlington—"what! another?"

"Yes—swore I 'd have it ; carried off St. George's last night —that makes ten pump-handles at my chambers. Glorious fun ! must have a dozen, though," said the peer. "However, you must come with us to-night."

"You know, my dear lord Slap, that I 'm yours entirely, but to-night," and Cramlington sought to excuse himself.

"Must come ; such sport in hand—the crowning joke, d—n me !—the crowning joke, ha ! ha ! I've hired a stable ready to receive him," said his lordship.

"Him ! whom ?" asked Cramlington.

"Billy Pitt. Carry him off to-night ! Ha ! ha ! how I shall make those damned editors cackle ! Talking of editors, have you seen what that scoundrel, the editor of—what 's the paper—said of me ? I 'll give his ears to my terrier, by— but, however, I 've condescended to answer him. Read that, Cram—read that," and his lordship flung a letter on the table, which Cramlington opened and read. The contents were as follow :—

"'*TO THE EDITOR OF* ——

"'*Sir,—In your paper of Thursday, the following base and contemptible paragraph has been kindly pointed out to me :—*

"Lord Slap again.—On Tuesday morning, the shopman of Mr. Dobree, pawnbroker, of Charlotte Street, was considerably astonished and alarmed on discovering that the three balls suspended over the shop-door had been violently carried off during the night : information of the robbery was immediately given at the police-office. The most curious, and we must add, the most flagitious part of the mischief remains to be told : for on that very morning, what was the surprise of the footman of

the Bishop of L——, to find the Lombardy arms, the property of Mr. Dobree, pawnbroker, fastened immediately over the door of the right reverend prelate! His lordship, with that kindliness of disposition which has endeared him to his reverend brethren, immediately gave orders for the return of the property to Mr. Dobree: the balls have been restored to their pristine station. It is almost needless to add, that Lord Slap and his friends have been implicated in the transaction. When will this eccentric nobleman have sown his wild oats?"

'Now, sir, permit me very briefly to remark on this paragraph, in which it is very difficult to separate the falsehood from the malice. Your readers will henceforth know what amount of belief to award to your fanciful lucubrations, when I distinctly and solemnly state, that the three balls—the 'Lombardy arms' as you are pleased learnedly to designate them—belonging to Mr. Dobree, never were removed to the house of the Bishop of L——. No, sir; it is a duty I owe to the public and myself to state, that it was the mansion of the Bishop of E—— that on Tuesday morning last was found decorated with the insignia of the pawnbroker. You will, I trust, in future, abstain from coupling my name with circumstances of the truth of which you appear alike ignorant and unmindful.

'I remain, yours,

'SLAP.

'P.S. You are pleased to ask, when will my wild oats be sown? To this I make answer,—about the time that your hemp will be up.'"

"That *is* splendid!" exclaimed Cramlington, "he'll not forget that, I think."

"The scoundrel!" cried Slap, "I'll have his ears off—I'll have his ears in spirits of wine to show my friends—I *will*!"

"Serve him right—serve him right, d—n me!" added Cramlington with some hesitation; for it almost seemed that he considered the oath as the exclusive property of his lordship, and therefore rarely indulged himself with it in the presence of the peer.

"But you must be with us to-night, Cram; such fun! Must carry off Billy Pitt," cried Slap.

"What Billy Pitt? Any rascally editor of that name, eh?" inquired Cramlington.

"Editor! D—n all editors! I mean, Billy Pitt, the minister, out of Hanover-square," answered his lordship.

"What! the statue—carry off the statue?" and Cramlington stared at the boldness of the idea.

"To be sure; tired of street-door knockers and pump-handles; they're small game, d—n me! and make no noise now. But to

carry off Billy Pitt—that will make something of a stir, I think," exclaimed Slap, big with the enterprise.

"But it can't be done, my dear Slap," said Cramlington timidly.

"Can't it! I've engaged fifty fine fellows—such splendid rascals—and, ha! ha! I say, Cram, how the tabbies will stare when they get up in the morning and find Pitt walked away—discover the 'heaven-born minister' removed—oh! what glorious fun," and the senator was in ecstacies at his anticipated triumph. "Well, Cram, you must be one of us."

"My dear Slap, I should have no objection, but the fact is, the freak involves politics; you know, I swear by Pitt, and"—

"Oh, d—n it! there's no politics in the business, none at all; I intend to prove that there's no politics in the matter," said Slap.

"How, my dear Slap, can you disabuse the public mind of the prejudice? They'll set down what you mean merely to be a joke, as a conspiracy of the disaffected," observed Cramlington, with more than his usual acuteness.

"I've provided against that; and I tell you how. To-night we shall carry off Pitt from Hanover-square; well, to-morrow, we shall remove Canning from Palace Yard, and the night after, we intend to steal old Cartwright from Burton Crescent. Eh? Ha! ha!" and his lordship roared with delight.

"Why, you're not serious, my dear Slap?" asked Cramlington.

"Don't you perceive," said the peer, "as we favour no party, we shall triumphantly assert our independence?"

"Carry off three statues! All London will be in an uproar. Three statues—and where will you put 'em?"

"All settled, I tell you: I've hired two stables and a cow-house to receive 'em. What fun, eh? Never was such fun!"

"But I'm very much afraid, my dear Slap, that—hang it! the authorities as they call themselves know nothing of real humour—that you may get yourself into an ugly scrape. It's one thing to run away with a cobbler's knocker, and another to make off with two prime ministers," said the cautious Cramlington.

"That's it," exclaimed Slap—"there's the fun. The thing has never yet been attempted; 'twill be the greatest thing of the day. Tom Rumpus will be of the party, and Blow, he's only gone to Bath to bury his aunt, he'll be back in time for the sport. You know my friendship for you, Cram? I wouldn't let you out of the party, no— d—n me! not for any money."

And Cramlington shook lord Slap's hand, swearing that he should never, to his dying day, forget the senator's kindness.

"Really, my dear Slap, your condescension overpowers me! That I, a mere commoner, should be thus admitted to your most private recreations,"—

"Don't mention it," cried his liberal lordship, "True genius levels all distinctions; and never—never can I forget the cool courage with which, while I tossed with the mutton-pie man, you laid the train of gunpowder under his very nose, and blew him"—

"Oh, a trifle—not worth naming, my dear lord—quite a trifle," cried the modest Cramlington.

"Trifles show the man, Cram," said the peer; "from that very night, I was convinced you were destined for great things, d—n me. Therefore, you must join us with the statues! Look at the glory—look at the fun! There 'll be a proclamation out—hundred pounds reward—oh, what real wit!"

"A thought has struck me," exclaimed Cramlington, "a brilliant thought, my lord. The thing will make just as much noise, and isn't attended with half the danger; listen, my lord."

"Hum! d—n me! 'fraid there 's no fun in what you 're going to say; however, go on," said the peer.

"You know the statue of the venerable George the Third—the statue on horseback?" asked Cramlington.

"Cockspur-street—the old farmer with his hat off?" said lord Slap carelessly.

"The same, my lord. In meditating upon the statue of that good and great man"—

"That 's right," said Slap, interrupting his friend, "I like a spirit of loyalty—too little of it in this d—d levelling age."

"In contemplating the statue," repeated Cramlington, pleased with the eulogy of the peer, "of that good, great, and temperate man—of that enlightened legislator, and staunch supporter of the established church,—has your lordship never been struck with his pig-tail?"

"Infant poker?—Yes."

"Well, then, my lord, I propose—at all events to begin with—that instead of carrying away William Pitt, we saw off by way of instalment the pig-tail of George the Third."

"No, no," cried lord Slap, "it 's disrespectful; don't mind removing a minister or two into a cow-house, but d—n it! won't touch a copper hair of the pig-tail of sacred majesty. Like wit—but d—n disaffection!"

"I applaud your principles, my lord—they do honour to your heart and head," exclaimed Cramlington.

"Have sworn to defend the prerogative of the crown," cried lord Slap, kindling with generous ardour, "and look upon that

pig-tail as one of the sacred institutions of my country. Like a harmless frolic, but d—n treason!" and lord Slap, to the astonishment of the commoner Cramlington, assumed all the severe dignity of an hereditary senator. "Cramlington," said lord Slap, with touching gravity, "if we are to remain friends, not a word, not a syllable on the removal of that queue. I would shed the last drop of my best heart's blood in defence of that institutional pig-tail."

"No man can suspect my principles, my lord," said Cramlington, affected by the earnestness of the peer. "When I proposed to saw off the pig-tail of his majesty, I hope that you will do me the justice to believe that to the statue itself I intended nothing personal."

"I know that—never doubted your principles, Cram, but your wit, your capital keen wit,"—

"My dear lord," simpered Cramlington.

"So apt to run away with you. However, come with me to my rooms—now, I 'll not be denied—all the lads are there."

"I 'll follow you—upon my honour," said Cramlington.

"Won't leave you—won't, d—n me!" cried the peer; and Cramlington, finding the nobleman determined, hurriedly dressed himself, and having given Applejohn the strictest orders to attend to the comforts of the spaniel, was about to depart with his lordship. "Oh!" cried Cramlington, "has any one been here, John?"

"Your tailor, sir," said the domestic.

"My tailor! My tailor—impossible!" cried Cramlington, and he rolled his eyes.

"I beg your pardon then, sir," said John, "he mayn't be your tradesman, but as I heard he is a tailor, I thought that perhaps, Mr. Zweifler,"—

"Who?" shouted Cramlington, turning pale as paper.

"Mr. Zweifler, sir, he has been here, and"—

"What! do you employ that old German rascal?" asked lord Slap of his astonished friend.

"I—I have known him for—for," and Cramlington turned to his servant—"who—who did he ask for?"

"He asked for—for my master," replied John.

"Aye, for Mr. Cramlington?"

"Yes, sir, I think he asked for you by name; but he seemed very odd and passionate, sir," said Applejohn.

"Upon my soul, d—n me! I do wonder, Cramlington, that you employ such an old scoundrel; but if the miscreant 's pressing, we must give him a hint to mend his behaviour: yes, we must set his house on fire, or play him some such practical

joke," said lord Slap, and placing his sound arm in the arm of the confused Cramlington, the nobleman led the commoner away to meet a few of the midnight spirits of the age, to whom with little ceremony we introduce the reader.

CHAPTER XIII.

Lord Slap and his friend were received with a shout by four gentlemen assembled at the lodgings of the peer, whose arrival was the signal to serve dinner. "Slap," cried one of the party, whose bold, handsome countenance was not entirely disfigured by a severe bruise, and several cuts, "Slap, my dear fellow, permit me to introduce my young friend Plucky, one of the oldest families in Devonshire,—a gentleman who will be an honour to our society."

"The introduction of my dear friend Rumpus," said lord Slap, bowing to the new-comer, a sickly-looking boy of nineteen, "is a guarantee of all the amiable and excellent qualities of a gentleman."

"I trust, my lord," cried young Plucky, in a chirping voice, "that is, I hope to deserve the eulogies of my valuable friend, the Hon. Tom Rumpus."

"No doubt, sir—no doubt, d—n me!" said Slap.—"Come lads; let us feed, and then to business."

"Ha! ha! my dear Slap—you are the most exquisite fellow—it is the best joke I ever heard," exclaimed Rumpus at the latter end of the meal.

"What, Rowdow? you 've let the cat out of the bag, eh? d—n it! couldn't keep the secret, eh?" and lord Slap shook his head reproachfully at lord Rowdow, who, seeming to taste every word ere he uttered it, slowly excused himself on the score that "he knew Slap wouldn't mind the affair being whispered to Tom Rumpus."

"Yes—yes—that 's how a man's brightest ideas sometimes miss fire. We should look very small now, if we were to find Billy Pitt put under the protection of five hundred of the police," said Slap.

"'Twould be devilish annoying," said Rumpus, "but there 's no fear of that. It is the best idea since the carrying off the three balls from the pawnbroker, and hanging them at"—

"Bye-the-by, gentlemen, have you seen what that scoundrel editor says of the transaction? Have you seen how the miscreant

garbles the business?" asked lord Slap. "I 've written to the ragamuffin."

"Upon my life, you 're wrong—you are, indeed, Slap," said the Hon. Tom Rumpus; "I 'd treat such vagabonds with silent contempt—or, if they came in my way, with a horsewhip."

"I shall be very happy," cried young Plucky, "very happy, indeed, my dear lord Slap, if you contemplate horsewhipping any body, to go and hold the door, while you lay into the ruffian."

"Sir—d—n me!—eternally obliged to you, Mr. Plucky. A little wine, sir?" and lord Slap pledged his new friend.

"But, seriously, Slap," said Rowdow, "I would not write to the papers."

"No, after all," observed Cramlington, "it 's low."

"It 's not only low," said Mr. Smasherton, the last of the four, "but it 's impolitic; it makes the scoundrels so devilish conceited; it makes them crow about—what do they call it?—yes public opinion,—I think that 's the slang phrase. Public opinion! ha! ha!"

"What is it made of?" asked young Plucky, "public opinion! how is it manufactured?"

"That 's a devilish droll question, Plucky. Yes, I should like to have it analysed; it wouldn't be bad sport to separate the component parts of public opinion," observed lord Slap, and all the party roared with laughter at the suggestion.

"Let 's indulge in a little chemistry," said the Hon. Tom Rumpus, "let 's analyse it; let us suppose this champagne so much public opinion, and all of us, chemists as we are, declare what we find in it."

"Bravo!" cried the party, and every man filled his glass. "Do you begin, professor Rumpus," said lord Slap.

"Aye, do," exclaimed Cramlington; "do, Tom, and as I have said, that is, as Mr. Pope has said—

'Catch the living sparkles as they rise.'

Now, Tom, what do you see?"

The Hon. Tom Rumpus, held a glass of champagne to his observing eye, and thus gravely characterised

"The beaded bubbles winking at the brim."

"Now, gentlemen, this fluid is called public opinion—it has been denominated the wine of life, the thing by which we move, and breathe, and all that; there," and Tom looked closely at the air bubbles,—"there go a crew of shirtless editors—ha!—they 're up and out, before you can count 'em."

"I see a mob of 'unwashed artificers,'" said Rowdow, looking steadily in his glass, "and now, where the devil are they?"

"There go my tailors!" exclaimed young Plucky, as the bubbles rose and burst.

"Yes, I should think your tailors break sooner than any other," said Smasherton, and the intended joke was loudly applauded.

"I think—I think," cried Cramlington, staring curiously at the glass, "yes, I 'm almost sure I 've caught hold of my washerwoman."

"And there 's my bootmaker," exclaimed lord Slap—"and there 's—eh?—how d—d muddy this wine is!"

"All public opinion, my dear fellow," cried Tom Rumpus; "the greatest part of it to be got only from the dregs: so, gentlemen, let us have done with our practical chemistry. We 've analysed opinion, and find it composed of scoundrel editors—a man's own tradesmen—and muck in general."

"And now to business," exclaimed lord Slap. "I 've hired the men—all the tackle 's in order—and you are all determined upon the removal of the minister?"

"Have you secured him a retreat?" asked Rumpus. "Where is he to be laid by?"

"Never fear me, lads; I 've hired a splendid shed for the prime minister. What glorious fun, eh? what sport 'twill make! I say, boys, if there 's a public meeting on the matter, we must all go and speak; we must all express our indignation at the miscreants, eh? ha! ha! what fun!" again cried lord Slap.

"Great pity you hav'n't room for the bronze in your museum, Slap," said Rumpus.

"Has lord Slap a museum?" inquired young Plucky.

"Have I a museum!" exclaimed lord Slap, "look about you Plucky—not such another collection in the kingdom. But I 'll show you a few of the specimens."

"Why the devil, Slap," observed Smasherton, "why don't you have a catalogue for visitors?"

"D—n it! I would,—but the fact is, I hate the trouble of literary composition."

"But what, my dear lord Slap," and young Plucky looked wonderingly about him, "what are the articles in your museum?"

"Look there; lot the first," and lord Slap pointed to a corner.

"Lot!" exclaimed Plucky, "why, my dear lord, they 're pump-handles."

"Ten; brought away the tenth—St. George's—last night. Every thing in my collection, my dear Plucky, is the fruit of

hard conquest; no d—d presentations. I only want two more handles to make the set complete. However, I have a weightier business in hand just now; I have first to secure two of the principal ministers, and the pump-handles will follow. Ha! Rumpus, do you see that one?" and lord Slap pointed to one of the ten hydraulic instruments. "That 's St. Giles. Don't you recollect,—the scoundrel policeman had his bludgeon raised at my temple, when you bent that bit of iron over his skull, and we got off? Should have been killed but for that—never, never, my dear Rumpus, do I look at that pump-handle without thinking of you. Ten of 'em, Plucky! isn't it fun?"

"I had no idea," said Plucky—"capital."

"Look here—number two," said lord Slap, exhibiting a huge bronze knocker.

"Is that an interesting relic?" asked Plucky.

"Very; wouldn't take any money for it. This knocker was the property of the late William Wilberforce—had a great respect for the man;—watched three nights to wrench off his knocker."

"What is this?" inquired Plucky, reading a label attached to number three, "what is this—'*A trifle from Fulham?*'"

"That is," said lord Slap, "the bell-pull from the gate of the Bishop of London: and there you see number four—for I 'm above bigotry of all kind—is the scraper of Doctor Chalmers. But there 's nothing here; come into this room"—and lord Slap conducted Plucky into an inner chamber, filled with the richest and most curious midnight spoils. Rumpus, Cramlington, and others followed.

"What is this—a Highlander?" asked Plucky, staring at a painted image, the size of life.

"Yes; carried him off from the door of a snuff-shop. I say, Smasherton, you recollect that night—you 'd two ribs snapped—capital fun, wasn't it?" cried lord Slap.

"A stout, stalwart fellow," exclaimed Plucky, admiring the kilted effigy.

"Said to be like Sir Luke Noodle, before he was breeched—that 's why I keep it. Great respect for Sir Luke—talks more and says less than any man on the bench," observed Slap.

"And what are these, my dear Slap,—door-plates?" asked Plucky.

"Eight-and-thirty of 'em,—only two more, you know, Rumpus, and I win my wager," said Slap.

"What wager is that, my dear lord?" inquired Cramlington.

"Why, I 've laid Slap a fifty that he doesn't carry off forty door-plates with the name of 'Smith' upon 'em, in three months; and I 'm very much inclined to fear that I have made an ass of

myself; to be sure, there 's only a fortnight left of the time," said Rumpus.

"Don't flatter yourself, Tom," cried Lord Slap; "I 've already marked out six—but at present all my thoughts are absorbed by the prime minister. I say," and Slap pointed to half-a-dozen police lanterns, "do you recollect the night we fought for these? —what fun!"

"Wasn't that the night we sent seventy accoucheurs to the Lord Chancellor?" asked Rowdow.

"Yes," answered Smasherton, "and the monthly nurses to the Attorney-General. Glorious wit!"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Plucky, "what—what have we here?"

"Ha! that *was* fun. Tom Rumpus was terribly drunk, when luckily we met some fellows carrying home this new coffin—we thrashed 'em soundly—such wit!—took away the commodity, brought Tom home in it, and here it is. The undertakers had to go back and manufacture another article. Great fun," cried Slap.

"By-the-bye," said Smasherton, "this reminds me of bad news. I forgot to tell you."

"What 's the matter?" exclaimed two or three of the party.

"Blow can't be with us in our attack on the minister. He 's at Bath, you know, and they won't bury his aunt until Wednesday."

"Shameful," cried Slap, "never mind—must do without him."

"What, my dear lord Slap, what is that collection of curious caps and——"

"Ha! Plucky—there isn't such another collection as that in the possession of any other nobleman in the world. What do you think they are? They are the hats, caps, bonnets, or call them what you will, of all the watchmen of Europe," answered his lordship.

"You don't mean it, Slap?" cried Plucky.

"Taken with my own hands, my dear Plucky—taken in hard fight. I intend to make another tour for the coats,—such fun! —I 'll have the whole costume before I 've done, from the common dress of an English policeman to the holiday suit of a janissary. That 's what I call real fun—true humour—glorious wit."

"You *have* travelled then, my dear lord?" asked Plucky, deferentially.

"Have travelled! I 'll show you that I have in a minute—here, never mind the rest of the museum now," and lord Slap quitted the room wherein were five hundred articles, among

which might be found knockers, scrapers, barbers' poles, black dolls, dairy-signs of cows, golden boots, and other domestic instruments, and familiar types of commerce. "You ask me if I have travelled, eh? Here, Mameluke," and Slap called to his servant, "hand me my nose-bag."

"Your nose-bag, my dear lord!" exclaimed the astonished Plucky. "A peer's nose-bag!"

"Here it is," cried the noble lord, as his servant handed to him a tolerably large velvet bag, crammed with apparently some weighty substance. "Now, Plucky, lad, you ask me if I have travelled? I'll just trouble you to cast your eyes over these," and with a word the peer emptied the bag of its contents, which fell in a rattling shower upon the table.

"Stones!" shouted Plucky, jumping at the sound.

"Look at 'em; they are stones—but look at 'em," cried his lordship.

Young Plucky picked up the stones, one by one, and having minutely examined a dozen of them, exclaimed—"Good heavens! my lord—why, they 're noses."

"Every one of 'em—warrant 'em all noses," cried Lord Slap; "noses of both genders and of all shapes, from the nose of Diana to the snout of Pan. That 's fun, if you like. A hundred noses! And now, I think, Plucky, you 'll not ask me again if I have travelled."

"Really, my lord, I 'm very dull—I don't apprehend; I don't see the connexion of your travels with these noses," said Plucky.

"Don't you? well then, permit me to illumine you, Mr. Plucky; and to assure you upon the honour of a nobleman, whose whole life he is proud to say has been spent in pursuit of the humorous, that these noses are from the most eminent galleries and gardens of the most superb cities of Europe."

"Copies?" asked Plucky.

"Copies be d—d! I chipped them all off the original statues, with my own fingers, my own hammer, and my own chisel," said the peer. "But now to business, I'm resolved to-night to pull down the minister."

"I think we had better wait for Blow," was the counsel of Smasherton, "you know Blow 's a host. Now, our young friend, Plucky, has a motion."

"I have a motion, my lord," said young Plucky. "My lord, I observe in the public prints of this morning, that there are three remarkably fine tigers for sale, newly arrived in the East India Docks. Now my lord, as fun—glorious fun—is, as I understand, the object of this society, I humbly propose that these tigers be purchased, and on any evening that shall hereafter be determined

upon, conveyed in a coach or caravan to the doors of the Opera-House, and there be suffered to escape among the people as they are about quietly to depart for their homes and their beds."

A burst of applause honoured the motion of young Mr. Plucky; and the epithets, "glorious fellow"—"splendid wit"—"first-rate humourist"—were liberally bestowed upon him.

"D—n me!" exclaimed Lord Slap, "there's something in it. How many tigers—three?"

"Just the number," said Rowdow; "one for boxes—one for pit—and one for gallery. I shall vote for the tigers—decidedly."

"Still, I—I would suggest, as an amendment, that the experiment should not be made at the Opera-House—no—some of us may have friends and relations there, and—no; it might not be considered gentlemanly. I would suggest that the tigers should be taken on a holiday-night to some low play-house, and at a lucky minute let loose among the mob." Thus spoke Lord Slap.

"That's better, very considerably better," cried Smasherton.

"I am quite in your lordship's hands," said young Plucky, with commendable modesty.

"Will your lordship, then, be good enough to put the tigers?" asked the Hon. Tom Rumpus.

"A show of hands, gentlemen, for the tigers," was the order of lord Slap, and every hand was uplifted in favour of the animals.

"Now, when are the tigers to be tried?" inquired Rowdow, anxious for the sport.

"Why not to-morrow?" asked Rumpus.

"Certainly not," said lord Slap, "how do we know what condition they're in?"

"Oh! they're in capital health—at least so said the paper," remarked Plucky.

"Health! D—n health! don't you perceive," said Slap, "if the tigers have been wellfed, they'll afford no sport? They'll be no more than Newfoundland pups let loose in the mob. The only way to insure glorious fun is to get the tigers into our own possession, and keep them without an inch of meat for ten days or a week at least."

"That's well thought of," said Smasherton. "If they're not sharp-set, we shall throw away our money and our time."

"But, it has just struck me," remarked the milky-hearted Cramlington, "that, possibly, the tigers may do some serious mischief; that they may wound, or perhaps kill somebody."

"Nothing of the sort; they'll not go beyond a scratch or so,"

said Slap. "Perhaps, take away a mouthful or two from some fat tailor, who can afford it; or, if he can't, he can advertise to have his pound of flesh back again, it being of no use to any but the owner. What would you have?" asked lord Slap.

"I would have the tigers, certainly; I would assuredly send them among the mob—one at the pit, one at the box, and one at the gallery—it will be glorious fun, and I stand to the tigers. Still—"

"Still what?" roared several voices.

"Still it would materially ease my mind if—if," and Cramlington was almost fearful of giving birth to the tenderness that laboured at his heart—"if they were muzzled." Cramlington sank in his seat, fairly knocked down by the shout of laughter that followed his humane suggestion. "I have finished," said Cramlington, with dignity—"I say no more."

A pause ensued.

"Has any gentleman anything to suggest?" asked lord Slap. Every man seemed plunged in thought—but no one made answer. "Well, Cramlington, if you like to put your pigtail into a motion,—"

"I will," exclaimed the energetic Cramlington, and rose.

"Pigtail in a motion!" cried Rumpus.

"My lords and gentlemen," said Cramlington, "as there is apparently a great dearth of fun, and as the tigers cannot come off for some time,—that is, until they're properly starved,—I have to make a motion." Whereupon, Mr. Cramlington moved that the pigtail of the statue of George the Third—all for the sake of glorious fun—should be cut off that night, and, neatly enveloped in silver paper, be sent to the court barber.

"Does anybody second the motion?—d—n me!" asked lord Slap, looking at the serious faces of the party.

Wits as they were, there was no man of the knot found so reckless in his principles.

The motion was consequently lost.

CHAPTER XIV.

John returned from his meeting with Mr. Bub to his master's chambers, where he waited the uncertain coming of the libertine Cramlington. "I shall be very glad when he marries," thought John, as, at about three in the morning, he was roused from slumber by a clamour in the street. Applejohn opened the door,

and in rushed his master, followed by lord Slap, Plucky, and the Hon. Tom Rumpus.

"Glorious fun!" cried his lordship, "think I've smashed that fellow's jaw," said the peer, sinking in a chair, and taking a lady's bonnet from his head.

"Did you hear the scoundrel inquire of me," asked young Plucky, "what right I had to kiss his wife?"

"D—d insolent ruffian!" said the Hon. Tom Rumpus. "If I'd been you, I'd have set him on the spikes of the railings and then have turned him round."

"It would have served him quite right—but if I hav'n't caught the animal, I've carried off the skin," and young Mr. Plucky produced a fur tippet from his coat-pocket.

"Gentlemen,—I—upon my word—you know, these people have no idea of real fun! If they were to proceed against us for a robbery," suggested Cramlington.

"There'd be fun!" cried lord Slap. "I say, Cram, should like to see you in the prisoner's dock—with your nose snuffing the southernwood and nettles. But I say, Mr. Cramlington," and his lordship took a severe tone, "you've shown yourself rather nice to-night; in our attack upon that old scoundrel, Zweifler—devilish lucky I thought of him as we passed the door—you hung back like a cur."

"A what, my lord,—was cur the word?" asked Cramlington, with some passion, for he felt that all the eyes of Rumpus and Plucky were upon him—"a cur, my lord!"

"I—I withdraw the cur,—but you must confess you hung fire," said the peer.

"I—the truth is, my lord, I believe that, at the bottom, old Zweifler is a tolerable fellow, and—"

"It's no matter; as you were so diffident in making a personal call, you couldn't do less than send your card."

"My card! my lord, what may I ask?—"

But the inquiry of Mr. Cramlington was broken short by a knocking at the door, and the shouting of Rowdow and Smasherton. The door was opened, when the two useful and illustrious members entered, dragging between them a remarkably diminutive and youthful-looking person, who in vain endeavoured to escape; they lifted him, despite his struggling, upon the table.

"Caught the vagabond, as he was running by the door," said Smasherton; "sure he's a thief."

"Upon my word, gentlemen, I'm not—I'm—" exclaimed the prisoner.

"Search him," cried Slap, "shouldn't wonder if he hasn't got the crown jewels in his pocket. What's your name?"

"Tape, sir," said the trembling little fellow, "Rufus Tape."

"Great historical likeness to Colonel Blood," said Slap; "where 's the jewels, you villain?"

"I—I 'm not a thief, gentlemen; I 'm a—a—tailor—I 'm,"—and the man recognised John—"Oh, Mr. Applejohn! is it you, sir? You can answer that I 'm a tailor; you know we 've worked together in—"

"What!" exclaimed Cramlington, turning very wrathfully round upon John, "are you a tailor?"

"I—I was bred to the business, sir," said Applejohn, "but I—I—"

"Yes, yes—there 's more to be got by a crooked nail than with an honest needle," said Tape, and Applejohn's teeth began to chatter at the insinuation of the captive.

"Silence!" cried lord Slap, "if you 're a tailor, prove your words; come, if you 're really a knight of the needle," and lord Slap broke a plate upon the head of the unfortunate little man, "sew the pieces up again."

"Gentlemen—pray, gentlemen, let me go, for my wife's sake," cried Tape.

"Your wife! Why, you miscreant," said Rowdow, "how long have you been breeched?"

"I told you I had a wife and family," cried Tape.

"Family!" said lord Slap, "well—d—n it! you a family! I shall think less of children after this. How many, you illicit ruffian?" roared lord Slap.

Rufus Tape shrank within himself, and gasped in his fear as he confessed—"Five."

"Five!" cried Plucky.

"Five," replied the father; "and I was running for the doctor for my wife, when these gentlemen—"

"The doctor! Oh! no wonder, d—n me!" said Slap; "that gentleman like us are ground to the dust by taxes, when idle ragamuffins like you bring such large families about us."

"But for such villains, I could keep my fox-hounds," said Rowdow. "And you 're a tailor, eh? Who 's your master?"

"Mr. Zweifler," said the man; "if you 'll only go to him,—"

"Better let the fellow go," was the advice of Cramlington; "he 's going for the doctor; consider his poor wife."

"Why, you atrocious wretch, that will make six children. Horrible!" cried young Plucky. "Don't let him go before he gives us pledges."

"I 'll give you anything, gentlemen; but do consider my wife," said Tape.

"Well, then, if we let you go this time," questioned lord Slap,

"will you promise this honourable company never to do so any more?"

"I'll promise anything, sir, that a man should promise," cried the tailor.

"Man! You a man—if you dare to entertain such an opinion," and lord Slap shook Tape by the collar, who promised for the future to eschew such conceit, if the honourable company would but suffer him to depart.

"Stop, Slap; don't let him go yet," cried Rumpus. "As all of us are in the Education Commission," and Tom winked at his friends, "it is our duty to get pledges for the new baby. Now, Mr. Tape; if you should be blessed with a son, will you give us your solemn word not to make the child a member of parliament?"

"La! gentlemen," answered the simple Tape, "I hope to bring the child up to some honest trade, I shouldn't think of anything else."

"Will you promise not to compel the boy to be a general officer?" asked Rowdow.

"Or a lord chancellor?" said Plucky.

"Or an archbishop?" required Slap.

"He shall be nothing, if you'll let me go, gentlemen," said Tape.

"No tailor can promise more," said Smasherton; "let him go."

"Stop," cried Rumpus, "if you're a true tailor, you have a needle about you; so, without another word, write us the promise in your blood."

"I—I can't write, gentlemen. Oh! my poor wife," and the wretched little man lifted up his hands entreatingly.

"Vanish, then!" cried Slap; "but mind, you outlawed rascal, mind, you never do so again." A way was made for the tailor to the door, and with the agility of a grasshopper the little man skipped from his tormentors, all of whom save Cramlington roared loudly at the adventure. "There, now," exclaimed Slap, "if that isn't wit, I don't know what wit is."

"Well, what's to be done now?" asked Rumpus. "Why, Cram, you look as lively as old Laocoon."

"Do you know," said Plucky, "I'm afraid that we have unconsciously given pain to one of Mr. Cramlington's relations."

"My relation, sir?" asked Cramlington, stammering, and blushing.

"Yes; to Mr. Rufus Tape: I'm sure he must have been a younger brother at least, you seem so devilishly affected."

"Mr. Plucky," cried Cramlington, his eyes flashing fire, "we are comparatively strangers,—still, sir, permit me to hope that

you do not wish to insult me. You do not really mean to insuate that I 'm any relation to that—"

"Ha! ha! Why, really, Mr. Cramlington," said Plucky, "I did but joke—I—of course, I should as soon think you the son and heir of a darning needle." Mr. Cramlington instantly seized Mr. Plucky's hand, pressing it with great warmth of feeling. "But what makes you, Cram, so very bilious in your mirth?"

"Why, the truth is," said Slap, "poor Cram 's in love."

"Now, my lord—my dear lord," cried Cramlington, "I—there are sacred subjects, my lord."

"To be sure; talking of sacred subjects," said his lordship, "I have that old rascal's door-plate in my pocket—there, Cram, it 's at your service," and lord Slap flung a brass-plate, with "*Zweifler*" on it, upon the table. "Bet a hundred I wrench off door-plate or knocker with any born gentleman in the kingdom."

"Really, my lord," said Cramlington, "I hope we 're not going too far: I trust that in these attacks on private property—"

"Private property! D—n it! if you 're getting sentimental," cried his lordship, "I've done with you. Come, gentlemen—another turn, and then soberly to bed at four. Farewell, Cram,—I suppose you 'll stop at home and take gruel to-night?"

"I am not very well, my lord—if you could do without me," and Cramlington looked imploringly.

"We 'll try—come gentlemen;" and Slap having donned a hat, the property of Cramlington, quitted the chamber, followed by his sprightly companions, who, we regret to state, did not couple the name of their domestic friend with the most respectful epithets.

"Not thorough-bred, I should say," observed young Plucky, "no, under-bred, depend upon it—as I'm a gentleman, under-bred."

Mr. Cramlington sat in a pensive mood, with his eye upon Zweifler's violated door-plate. At length, he condescended to address his servant. "I—I don't think this proceeding quite right. What do you think, John?"

"Why, sir, in a poor man I should call it highway-robbery; as it is, sir, I can't give an opinion. Only this, sir: I would advise you not to let the property be found on the premises. Pray, sir, will you allow me to ask you a question?" Cramlington bowed. "How long may it be before you think of getting married? I wouldn't leave you for the world, sir; but, really lord Slap puts a poor man's character quite at stake."

"You are right, John; I ought to marry: I have seen enough of society—had enough to do with titled men. After all, what

is there in a title? For as I said, in a song I wrote when quite a boy,—

> 'The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
> The man's the gold for all that.'"

"Oh! that's capital, sir—that's really capital! I do think, sir, if you would but talk a little of your poetry to lord Slap and his friends, 'twould do 'em some good."

Cramlington shook his head, and with a languid smile, said, "I fear not, John—I fear not." And Mr. Cramlington never did bestow a line upon his high companions.

"But it's getting late, John; good night," and Cramlington rose to retire to his bed: he paused, and, putting his hand to his forehead, said—"Tut! the lines have escaped me; they were in a tragedy I once wrote, but I left the manuscript in a hackney-coach."

"Bless my heart, sir," cried John, shocked at the loss, "and did you offer no reward for it?"

"'Twasn't worth the trouble. Now, I have it—but I do believe they're the only lines I can remember out of the whole play. Let me see," and Cramlington, extending his right arm, and grasping his black artificial locks with his left hand, to the passing fear of Applejohn, bellowed thus—

> "'"'Tis now the very witching time of night;
> When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
> Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot blood,
> And do such business as the bitter day
> Would quake to'"—

"For goodness' sake! sir," exclaimed John, frightened by the terrible purpose of the poet.

"Don't be alarmed, John; I forget the rest—but they're strong ar'n't they?" asked the bard.

"Shockingly strong, sir," said Applejohn, "and you left the written book in a hackney-coach, sir,—had you no copy, sir?"

"Hang it! no—it's gone, and it's no use grieving about it: still I do think, if I had had that tragedy acted, it might have done something; to be sure, we are never proper judges of our own works, yet I do think that little play one of the neatest things I ever wrote."

"What was it called, sir?" asked John.

"I never gave it a title," answered the unfortunate poet.

"How unlucky! That made it more difficult to come at—how very unlucky," repeated John.

"Good night, John—good—ha!—a couplet has just hopped into my head—and isn't bad for a sudden thought—

> 'To both of us a fair good night,
> And rosy dreams, and slumbers light.'"—

"Beautiful!" exclaimed John.

"Tolerable, for a sudden thought," said the retiring poet.

CHAPTER XV.

Early next morning, as Mr. Cramlington sat at breakfast, he was alarmed by a knock at the door. "If it should be Mr. Zweifler for his door-plate," cried John.

"Booby," said his master, dropping an egg-cup at the words, and turning very pale, "booby—how should he know it was here?"

"That 's true, sir;" replied John, "see what a thing is conscience." Another knock. "Still, sir, if it should be Mr. Zweifler for you."

"I 'm not at home, John," and young Cramlington ran like a startled hare into his bed-room, and closed the door, which he was heard to bolt and lock. Again the knocker sounded, and John's heart sank at the summons. How could he think of confronting the terrible looks of the old tailor! John stared in vain around him for the friendly wig: there was no help for it; he must, in his natural hair, appear before the man who had caught him with the crooked nail 'twixt thumb and finger. Another knock—and John, in desperation, opened the door. He trembled, and slowly raised his eyes to meet, as he feared, the burning glances of a furious old tailor, when he beheld the smiling, shining face of a damsel of about two-and-twenty; who, simpering at the confusion of John, held towards him a curiously folded piece of paper, and saying, "For Mr. Cramlington," dropt the note at John's feet, and ran away. John stared awhile about him—thought of Sarah Twopenny, sighed, picked up the note, and, walking to the bed-room door, rapped, and, to the great relief of the prisoner within, said—"You may come out, sir."

"Who was it?" asked Cramlington, rejoiced at his liberty.

"A letter, sir; a young woman brought it—she flung it down, and ran away," answered John.

"Why the devil didn't you stop her? Why did you let her run?—Now, what a deal of misery or joy, John," said Cram-

lington, sighing and looking interesting, and turning the note in his fingers, "may be contained in a little piece of paper! As I have said in an epistle of mine—humph! I forget, but 'twas a translation from the Latin of a nun, Heloisa—it was something about letters, but no matter." Mr. Cramlington opened the note, and his face beamed with sudden happiness. He sat down, and smiling placidly at Applejohn, said—"John, my time is come."

"Dear me, sir! what do you mean?" asked the anxious domestic.

"Get my trunks in order—my time is come. I shall carry off my lovely Caroline to night: this note—this precious note—is 't not,"—and Cramlington again folded the note, and flourished it to and fro—"is 't not like the wing of Cupid?"

"Why, sir, if I must say, I think it 's more like a cocked hat," said John.

"John, you want imagination; you want a part of that extraordinary faculty of which I possess so much—which makes everything out of nothing; which finds"—

"Talking of finding, sir," said John, interrupting his master, "I only wish you could find that tragedy you left in the hackney-coach."

"Pooh! 'tisn't worth thinking of," said Cramlington.

"Do you know, sir, I 've done nothing but dream about it all night? That bit, sir, where you make the 'churchyard yawn,' and the 'hot blood,'—that 's terribly fine."

"Nothing to what I have done; however, let my trunk be in readiness—my coat, cloak, and everything for a journey for a day or two. I shall be back at six, and then you must be prepared to attend me. First I must in person—give me my wig, John—fly to my darling Caroline. My wig, John."

John with reluctant step, retired for the raven wig and whiskers: returned with them, he stood looking pensively at his master.

"What 's the fellow staring at?" said Cramlington, "give me the wig."

"I wouldn't do it, sir, if I was you," said John, still holding back the jetty decoration.

"Wouldn't do what?"

"Why, sir, as it comes so near, I 'd throw off disguise, and go to the lady in my true colours. For instance, sir, if the lady don't like a fair man, see what a wretched house you 'll have after you marry. I 'd give up the black, sir," said Applejohn, "I would indeed."

"John, you 're a fool, and know nothing of the sex; they love us the better for cheating 'em—they do, indeed. Though—hang

'em !—we are no match for 'em ; no, they beat us hollow. As I have said in a little song of mine, in an opera that may come out some day, for I 've been so busy of late, I 've not had time to do the music—in that little song, I remember, I—the air is rather pretty and all my own, it goes much in this way ;" whereupon, Mr. Cramlington chirped forth—

" 'Tis woman that seduces all mankind,
By her we first are taught th' inveigling arts,
Her very eyes can cheat when most she 's kind,
She tricks us of our money with our hearts."

" It 's too true, sir," said Applejohn sighing. Cramlington encouraged, proceeded in a louder voice—

" For her like wolves by night we prowl for prey,
And practise ev'ry fraud to bribe her charms,
For suits of love like law, are earn'd by pay,
And beauty must be feed into our arms."

" I 'm afraid it 's too true," said Applejohn.—

" ' And beauty must be feed into our arms,' "

sang Cramlington, and catching his face in the glass, he stuck his hat upon his head, flung up his arm, and again repeating the shameful libel on the disinterestedness of the adorable sex, the singer quitted his chamber for the street.

" I 've thought too well of 'em, all my life," mused Applejohn left to himself ; " if I 'd been a rascal, what a happy fellow I might have been ! " John, however, made all possible haste to fulfil the orders of his master ; everything was speedily prepared, and John waited anxiously for the arrival of the poet and musician, though not without trembling at every sound, lest old Zweifler should again appear. Six o'clock came, and brought back Cramlington ; he was in a very flutter of delight. Entering the room, he exclaimed—

" ' Blest as the immortal gods is he—
The youth who fondly sits by thee ! '

In three hours more—a short three hours, and we shall be galloping to the altar—I shall call her mine—is my trunk ready ? All her charms—my great coat ? her warm, devoted heart—mind my comforter. Her blushing face—her—her—if, now, I could subdue myself for five minutes, I feel that I could write the most beautiful bit of verse—I "—

" Here 's pen, ink, and paper, sir," said Applejohn.

Mr. Cramlington sat down, and taking the goose-quill between

his thumb and finger, brushed his black locks back, and looked either inspired or hungry. He then applied three fingers of his left hand just over the top of his nose—frowned—looked at the carpet—again stared at the paper—and rising, put down the pen, with these remarkable words—"It 's no matter."

"Won't you write anything, sir?" asked the disappointed Applejohn.

"I'll throw off an ode in the carriage; there isn't time, now," said the poet. "I must dress for the theatre—we must be there at seven."

"What! sir—do you go to the playhouse first?" inquired John.

"That 's part of the plot, John; part of the plot. The post-chaise will be waiting for us at the end of the street; Caroline will be taken with a sudden faintness at the conclusion of the first act; indeed, she 'll be so very ill, that she 'll be obliged to go home immediately."

"Dear me! sir—I hope not," cried John, "for in that case"—

"Simpleton! In that case, I shall insist upon seeing her home, leaving her respected uncle and aunt in the boxes—her sister Maria is in the plot—then we jump into the coach, and—"

"I see it now," observed John with extraordinary sagacity. "Then you 'll carry her off and marry her?"

"Nothing less, as I 'm a gentleman: there 'll be a pretty stir, i' faith—a very pretty stir! Shouldn't wonder if some of the cousins want to shoot me; but no matter, as I 've said in one of my unprinted works—

'Come what will, I have been bless'd!'"

"Why, yes, sir; and once done, they can't unmarry you," said John, "that *is* a comfort."

"Sometimes," observed Cramlington; "but, quick, John—we have no time to lose. Call a coach, put everything in it,"—

"Do I travel with you?" asked John.

"Certainly not," was the reply of his master, who straightway gave his servant the fullest directions for the business of the night. The luggage was to be taken to a certain inn, where the post-chaise had been ordered—the trunk of Caroline had already been secretly despatched there—the post-boy knew where to wait, and John was to be at the door of the theatre, to attend the coming of the happy couple, and take further orders. We are happy to inform the reader that all these preliminaries were effected in the happiest manner. Seven o'clock was come—was past; Mr. and Mrs. Monteagle, and their lovely nieces, Caroline and Maria Monteagle, with an interesting cousin, named Frederick

Ponto, new from Bombay, and the happy, exulting Henry Cramlington had passed the threshold of the Temple of the Muses—and were seated in the box—the post-boy sauntered by his ready vehicle at the end of the street, and John Applejohn kept watch beneath a portico, massive, if not very picturesque. The evening grew chilly, and John, in his exceeding tenderness for the health of his master, bethought him of a thick great coat, deposited with the luggage in the chaise: he immediately walked to the end of the street, and was accosted by the post-boy.

"Coming?" was the brief question.

"Every minute," answered Applejohn, taking the coat from the chaise, and returning to his place of watch. He had not remained there many minutes, when he was accosted by a tall thin man.

"Why, young man, you've never come to see the elephant? Try him again to-night—ha! ha!—be damned again; glorious triumph!" Thus spoke, one Mr. Shadowly, an unpatronised and unemployed Hamlet, benevolently moved to address Applejohn. "You never came to see this trash?" asked the tall Shadowly—"Let me hope, my dear sir, that you make no party to uphold the rhinoceros to the destruction of the true drama?"

"Certainly not, sir," answered Applejohn, "I was waiting here for—for—"

"I thought so; I was sure from a certain intelligence or manner that"—and here the speaker grasped John's hand—"did you ever see my Hamlet?"

"Never had that pleasure," said John.

"Only wait a little—they'll be sure to send for me—I know they will; the elephant can't go through it; they may try to thrust him down, but they must fall back upon my Hamlet. You say, you never saw it? Very well; it's all right. I am not a malicious man, thank heaven! I'm not a malicious man, or after the insults I have received from the manager, I might refuse to come forward. However, I trust that my devotion to the true interests of the stage will render me forgetful of petty annoyances.—I—I have been three times round to the stage-door, offering my services—I have my Hamlet's dress all ready; cloak, star, sword, everything—I am now about to go for the fourth time! Yes, for the fourth, and last time, knowing that the elephant must fail, I'll step forward to save the house from inevitable destruction. The manager shall not say, that I suffered personal feeling to destroy the real drama at the last moment. Come with me, I'll take you behind the scenes."

"I'm very much obliged to you—another time—but I have business, and can't at present stir from this spot," said Applejohn.

"Stay here, then; I'll send a man round for you—for I shall be dressing for the part in five minutes,—I'll send a man, who shall take you into the theatre. I will—upon the honour of a gentleman," was the assurance of the sanguine Mr. Shadowly, who turned from John, to offer for the fourth and last time the entire use of his Hamlet to a sinking manager. The reader, however, may judge of the spirit with which the kind, benevolent offer was received, from the fact, that in less than ten minutes Mr. Shadowly returned with huge strides to the portico, where John with the coat on his arm was still waiting. Great was the indignation in the looks of the actor! He seized Applejohn by the arm, and in a sharp, whistling voice, exclaimed—

"'——Now could I drink hot blood;
And do such business as the bitter day
Would quake to look upon!'"

"I could," exclaimed Shadowly, glaring at the astonished Applejohn—"I could!"

"I say," said John, taking breath, "did you ever find anything in a hackney-coach?"

"Talk not to me of hackney-coaches, man," cried Shadowly, "what think you of that villain Allgag—that thief—that?"—

"Why, as for thief, Mr.—I have asked, and I hear your name 's Shadowly,"—and John began to put a very serious face upon the matter.

"It is, sir; Jaffier Shadowly; but that is not now the business, it"—

"Oh! I don't know that: things come out very oddly; would you be good enough to repeat those words—those about 'hot blood?'"

"What! you like my way of speaking them? There never was man, woman, or child, who did not like my way; and yet that villain Allgag! I have this moment made to him my fourth offer, and would you believe it?"—

"Yes; but the 'hot blood?'" said Applejohn.

"Ha! you 're a man of taste—I can perceive that you have the right feeling of the art," said Shadowly.

"The—the 'hot blood'—if you please," urged Applejohn.

"But, never mind; you shall see me play the whole part—you shall; and when that leprous elephant and that wretched rhinoceros are dug up centuries hence in a fossil state,—why then, yes, even then, my Hamlet,"—

"I beg your pardon, but I insist upon hearing those words again," pressed John, "I must hear them."

"I admire your enthusiasm, young man: it is complimentary

—I feel it to be so. Yet, don't be impatient; the words are,"—John appeared to listen with the deepest attention—"the words are—

> "'———Now could I drink hot blood;
> And do such business as the bitter day
> Would quake to look upon!'"

"And you 'll mean to tell me, Mr. Shadowly," said John, becoming excited, you 'll mean to tell me, you 've never been in a hackney-coach?"

"Often—what has that to do with Hamlet?" asked Shadowly.

"I mean—you know very well what I mean—that you never found anything in a hackney-coach? Now, consider; and confess the truth."

"Found anything in a hackney-coach!" exclaimed Shadowly.

"If you 'll give up the property at once, I 'll"—John was interrupted in his intended proposition by his master, who called him from the lobby; John ran in great haste to Cramlington, whom he found with a lady trembling on his arm. "Oh, sir! you don't know what I have to tell you!" exclaimed John.

"Silence, blockhead — and call the coach — silence, I say. What have you there?" cried Cramlington.

"Your coat, sir,—only your coat sir; but I was going to say,"—

"Fool! give it me — and away," exclaimed Cramlington, snatching the coat from his servant; when the pocket-book—carelessly left in the coat of Mr. Henry Cramlington—fell from the pocket, and was instantly picked up by a lurking thief, who immediately made from the lobby with his prize.

"Sir—sir—stop thief!—sir, you 've lost your pocket-book," exclaimed a stranger.

"My pocket-book!" cried Cramlington.

"Yes, sir—I saw him—I saw it fall—I 'll catch him—stop thief!" roared Applejohn, and was running in pursuit of the offender, when Mr. Cramlington seized John by the collar.

"Let him be—stay where you are—poor wretch!—I wouldn't prosecute"—exclaimed Cramlington in sudden agitation.

"Oh, sir! you 're too kind, sir—stop thief!—you must, sir,—stop thief!" roared Applejohn, and with a sudden and violent effort he disengaged himself from his compassionate master, and ran, roaring "stop thief!" after the delinquent.

"I—I—I wouldn't prosecute—it 's no matter—come, Caroline," said Cramlington, endeavouring to make his way through the crowd too quickly gathered about him.

"But, sir—'tis a duty, sir, you owe to society, sir," said the stranger; "I hope the scoundrel will be caught."

"What 's this, Mr. Cramlington,—robbed?" — asked Mr. Frederick Ponto, that gentleman having followed the fair Caroline from the box, resolving, despite the assurance of Maria, that her sister would soon be better, to attend the sufferer to her carriage. "Eh; Caroline—why you seem very much better?"

"Very much—very much better," said Cramlington, "this way—this way;" and the lover endeavoured to hurry his trembling charge through a crowd of people, all considerably interested in the loss of the gentleman, and the probable capture of the thief.

"Hurra! we 've caught him—here he is!—bring him along!" cried twenty voices, as the robber was dragged forward.

"I caught him, sir—nearly slipped through my fingers though!" exclaimed the almost breathless Applejohn—"but I fixed my hand in his collar, sir—and here—here 's your pocket-book, sir!"

"Pocket-book? Ha! ha! Pocket-book! Hurra for a pocket-book!" and a roar of laughter from the mob greeted the display of the recovered property. The reader will, possibly, cease to wonder at this vulgar merriment, when informed that the pocket-book—an article apparently stuffed with bank-paper,—the valuable pocket-book of Henry Cramlington, Esq., suddenly exhibited by the trusty Applejohn, appeared no other than—a tailor's book of patterns!

Mr. Cramlington turned pale, and almost fainted, as he stared at the damning witnesses in blue, black, grey, green, brown!

"Caroline!" said Frederick Ponto to his cousin, and offered his arm.

"Frederick!" cried the young lady, and—evidently not knowing what she did—accepted it.

"Positively, a tailor!" exclaimed Frederick—"well, I thought there was a mystery about"—

"Spare my feelings, Frederick—spare my feelings," was the entreaty of Caroline, as bewildered with shame and disappointment, she was assisted into the carriage by her cousin. (We may here as well dispose of the lady, by stating that in six weeks after the above melancholy catastrophe, she became Mrs. Ponto.)

"Oh! you infernal scoundrel!" exclaimed Cramlington.

"A wicked thief," said Applejohn, believing that his master addressed the robber.

"But I 'll trounce you, I will—yes, I 'll—I 'll"—Cramlington was speechless with passion.

"You must prosecute him, sir," said a police constable: "this way, sir—this way—the office is open."

"No—no—I don't mean to prosecute—I don't"—and Cram-

lington sought to escape, but the constables crowding about him, declared with several respectable lookers-on, that it was a duty the gentleman owed to society to transport the thief; and thus, despite of himself, Cramlington was hurried before the magistrate, many vulgar persons among the crowd addressing himself and the robber on the way.

"What a shame to rob a tailor!" cried one benevolent person —"I say, when will my coat be done?" inquired a second— "Button, not so short in the skirts as the last, if you please."— "Jack, what colour will you have?—'cause, make your choice, and he 'll measure you." Such were the sundry calls, gladdening the ears of the astonished Cramlington, as he was hurried to the office.

"Now, what 's all this?" asked the magistrate as the constables brought in the robber, the robbed, and the witnesses. "What is this?"

"Pickpocket, your worship," answered the constable, and the features of the accused were corroborative evidence against him.

"Who has he robbed?" inquired the magistrate—"Is this the gentleman?"

"He 's no gentleman," said the prisoner, who then added with the most profound contempt—"he 's only a tailor."

"State your case," said the magistrate to Cramlington; who trembling and stammering, deposed that his pocket had been picked by the prisoner at the bar. "Is that your property?" inquired his worship, pointing to the pattern-book.

"It—it is," answered Cramlington, blushing to the ears.

"You are a tailor, then?" said his worship.

"I—I was a tailor; but I—I do not practise at present—I am retired—I—I assure you, my lord, this is to me a most distressing situation; and as I understand that the prisoner at the bar" —how Mr. Cramlington became aware of the domestic fact, we know not—"is married, and has a very—very large family"—

"Gammon," said the hardened culprit, with the most offensive leer at his unwilling prosecutor.

"My good man, don't injure your cause," said the compassionate Cramlington.

"That will do, sir—that will do; the prisoner is committed for trial," and to the horror of the unwilling complainant, he was bound over to prosecute. Mr. Cramlington was about to quit the office, when Applejohn called to him—

"Sir—sir—don't go—there 's another thief," for though John was much astonished at finding in his magnificent master only a retired tailor, he was nevertheless determined that his employer

should have justice upon all his evil-doers. "Mr. Cramlington —don't go, sir"—

"Another thief!" exclaimed the magistrate; and then in an authoritative voice to Cramlington—"come back, sir." That gentleman turned back, and looking at John as though he could have eaten him, *cum grano salis*, anxiously awaited the event.

"Now, what is this?" asked his worship, "what's your charge?"

"If you please, your worship, there's something very mysterious in the conduct of that gentleman there," said Applejohn.

"Mysterious! don't talk in that manner here, sir; have you any charge to make?" asked his worship.

"If my master will let me, please your worship, I think I can get out something that may lead to the discovery of a dishonest transaction that"—

"Have you any charge to make?"

"I think I shall have, your worship. If you'll first allow me to ask of that gentleman—it's you, I mean, sir,"—and John addressed himself to the tall, pale Shadowly, who had come with the crowd.

"And what are you, sir?" asked the magistrate of Shadowly.

"My name, sir, is Jaffier Shadowly; I believe, pretty well known—despite the baseness of some parties—pretty well known, indeed, sir."

"Have you any charge against this man?" inquired his worship of Applejohn.

"I can take my oath, sir, to a certain fact: there may be some mistake in the matter; on the other hand, there may be robbery. Mr. Shadowly, will you just speak over those lines, you spoke to me—Mr. Cramlington, pray, sir, attend; you'll be astonished when you hear 'em—those lines you spoke to-night."

"Your worship," asked Mr. Shadowly, with a smile and a graceful bending of the body, "have I your permission?"

"Strange case this," said the magistrate, somewhat amused—"go on, sir; but don't be long."

"Your worship," said Mr. Shadowly, "I am proud of the opportunity so strangely afforded me, of showing you how infamously I have been treated by the champion of that system, which has crushed the native drama of the English stage, which has"—

"Go on with your business, sir; I can't have my time wasted with the native drama. Go on."

"I obey, sir;" said Mr. Shadowly, preparing himself.

"Mind—the very lines," cried Applejohn.

"I know my cue without a prompter," replied Shadowly, and then, fixed in his favourite attitude, began :—

"'T is now the very witching time of night;
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world. Now could I drink hot blood'"—

"There—there!" exclaimed Applejohn, incapable of longer silence. Mr. Shadowly threw at him an annihilating look, and repeated the words—

"'——————— Now could I drink hot blood;
And do such business as the bitter day
Would quake to look on.'"

"There, sir—there," cried Applejohn to his master—"isn't that enough? Won't you make a charge?"

Mr. Cramlington bit his lip, and shook his head with looks of great confusion at his well-meaning servant.

"What is all this?" inquired the magistrate.

"Why, your worship, I should like to ask Mr. Shadowly if he didn't get that speech out of a play?" asked Applejohn.

"Out of a play!" echoed Shadowly—"why, did you never hear of the sweet Swan of Avon?"

"Never mind swans or geese neither, that 's nothing to do with the present charge,"—said Applejohn. "Let me ask you one thing—it 's no use, sir, I will speak," said John to his agonised master, "you 'd let people take the eyes out of your head, and say nothing—I only want to ask you, if you know any more of that play?"

"Your worship," said Mr. Jaffier Shadowly, with a deeper smile, a lower bow than before, "it will give me infinite pleasure to go through the whole of the part, before you—and if any gentlemen of the press are present, I hope for their liberal treatment under the circumstances.—The whole of the part, your worship, beginning with the line—

"'A little more than kin, and less than kind,'

and ending with, for I play it from the original edition—

"'Why does the drum come hither?'"

"What is this jargon about?" asked the magistrate; and then to Applejohn—"Have you any charge to make?"

"In a minute, your worship," said John. "You confess, Mr. Shadowly, that you got all that from a play?"

"Why, replied Shadowly, with a pitying smile, "why, of course."

"Then, your worship," exclaimed John with energy, "I 'm prepared to swear that what he 's got he hasn't got honestly: I am prepared to swear upon the information of Mr. Cramlington, that that play is my master's property."

"Your master's property!" cried the magistrate.

"My master's property," asseverated John; "he wrote it—it was never printed—and moreover he told me that he lost the written book—left it in a hackney-coach!" A shout of laughter followed this declaration.

"Pray, sir," and the magistrate with very creditable gravity, turned to the retired tailor, Cramlington—"pray, sir, am I to understand that I sit before the author of Hamlet?"

"Sir," replied Cramlington, quite confounded by the disasters of the night, "I trust that I am not called upon to bear the blunders of my servant. I did certainly speak of a book, a manuscript copy, left by me in a hackney-coach, and my domestic —a simple person, as you perceive, sir—he has confused the—the —your worship must perceive the"—poor Cramlington tried to smile, and rushing from the office, dropt—"the very ludicrous mistake!"

"There never was so easy a man as my master," said John to Shadowly; "you 've had a lucky escape, I can tell you; if it had been some men,"—

At this moment there was a sudden noise in the passage, and immediately John, to his consternation, saw Mr. Cramlington, his respected master, dragged back to the office by the rude hand of Carl Zweifler, followed by his diminutive journeyman, Rufus Tape.

"I have got de teef—I have got de teef—my vindow—my door-blate!" exclaimed the old tailor.

"Silence—silence! What is this?" cried the magistrate.

"I vill hang him—I never did tink to hang a man—but mein Gott!—I vill hang dis teef," and Zweifler stood with his clenched hands, and his eyes glaring like a hungry cannibal upon the unfortunate culprit, involved in the fun, the glorious fun, of his noble friends—Slap, Rowdow, and party.

"What is the charge?" said the magistrate. "Take off your hat, fellow—take off his hat, officer."

The officer with more zeal than civility struck at the hat of Cramlington, and knocking it from his head, knocked with it his superb black wig, and the bushy whiskers thereto appended. Henry Cramlington stood confessed at the bar, with bare face and flaxen locks! Old Zweifler had proceeded with the greatest

vehemence—"Dis teef—dis tamn teef," when the old man turned round and staggered back—"mein Gott! de teef is mein son!"

"Your son, my good man? He seems a very tricksy, disreputable person. Well, he has robbed you, it appears? What"—added the magistrate—"what have you to say against him?"

"He is mein son!" cried the old man, and he wrung his hands—"mein own son!"

"Do you proceed against him?"

Old Zweifler drew himself up, buttoned his coat, and turning from the prisoner, said with great energy—"My heart is iron—I *do* broceed."

"What is your charge?" asked the magistrate.

"I go to ped last night—I but my head ubon my billow—dat billow, vhich he, de brisoner—Gott help me! mein own son—has stuffed with dorns.—I cannot sleeb—I—ven he was porn, he made my heart twice as pig—and now he is proken it."

"Proceed," said his worship. "Come to the charge, my good man."

"Last night—my vindows is proke—'tis not enough to preak my heart, but he preaks my vindows—my vindows is proke—and my door-blate stolen away."

"And you believe the prisoner, your son there, to be the thief? You charge him with stealing your door-plate?" Old Zweifler made no answer; and again the magistrate addressed him. "Attend to me, my good man. You charge the prisoner with stealing your door-plate?"

"Mein Gott!" exclaimed the old German trembling with emotion, "mein Gott! de brisoner is mein own son—and de brisoner cannot be a teef!" and then old Zweifler threw himself round, and fell upon the neck of the accused—"Oh, Ludwig! Ludwig! vy have you proke my heart!"

"Let us go home, father," said young Zweifler.

"You say home—to my own home—mit me? To stay mit me?" cried the father.

"To stay with you—to—I'm ashamed of myself, father—I"—

"I dank Gott! mein son is ashamed of himself! Oh, I dank Gott for dat! You hear, he is ashamed?"

"Have you no charge, my good man?" asked the magistrate.

"Charge! You hear—he is ashamed! What charge—ven he is ashamed?" cried old Zweifler, who with his son was about to quit the office, when they were met by certain officers bringing in for judgment the chivalric Plucky, and his spirited friend, Tom Rumpus. The prisoners paused at young Zweifler.

"He 's got another head certainly ; but I 'm —," said Rumpus, "if it isn't his coat and waistcoat."

"He makes his own," cried a voice in the crowd.

"Mein son, mein own son, Ludwig Zweifler," exclaimed the old tailor, clapping his blushing offspring on the shoulder, and to his confusion, making him confront the contemptuous glances of his late high companions.

"A tailor ! I told you, Rumpus—ha ! ha !—I told you," said Plucky, "that the fellow was hatched under a goose ; he showed so many white feathers."

The Hon. Tom Rumpus and Plucky were then conducted before his worship ; and, by virtue of hard cash, bought the prerogative of worrying an old woman, who denounced her persecutors as "a couple of murdering villains who would'nt let a poor soul roast her apples in peace and quietness."

We have now to account for the appearance of old Zweifler at the office. He had only that evening discovered a card-case flung through his dining-room window on the previous night by the humourous Lord Slap, who had with great skill extracted the missile from the pocket of young Cramlington ; against whom the tailor had come for a warrant, when he found in the libertine of high life his own graceless flesh and blood. By means of false name, false wig, and false whiskers, the young tailor had disguised his real self ; and assisted by large sums of money, which he had found very little difficulty to raise on post-obits at anything per cent., he had by degrees wriggled himself into what he believed to be the very best society ; Lords Slap and Rowdow, Rumpus, Smasherton and Plucky, being the choicest members of that elevated and enlightened body. Thus, he had stumbled upon an introduction to the Mounteagles, and had every prospect of improving his acquaintance with Caroline into a secret marriage, when the stolen pattern-book revealed his plebeian self, and the half-kindled torch of Hymen was extinguished by a thimble ! The book—the accursed book—by some horrible accident had been left in a coat which the unfortunate hero had worn in the business, and been added to the travelling wardrobe by the zealous Applejohn. Old Zweifler had learned that his son had been very often seen to enter the lodgings of Mr. Cramlington ; and hence the appearance of the old tailor at the chambers in search of his scapegrace offspring ; who, at length humbled and ashamed, returned to the shop-board, became a tailor to the very nails, and at this moment keeps his country-house and carriage upon broad-cloth.

Ludwig Zweifler, otherwise Henry Cramlington, sleeps under the paternal roof : but where—where is John Applejohn ? What

was the reward of all his noble intentions? Listen: he approached his late master, who caught him by the collar, twirled him round, and—but John escaped the graver injury. He, however, gave ear to a very unequivocal recommendation never to trust himself in the presence of the speaker again. John had ruined his master—as his master then believed; yet who is bold enough to say that John did not mean well?

CHAPTER XVI.

Again was John Applejohn upon the world; again was well nigh reduced to his last pound, when loitering in the Park, gazing at the ducks, fed by happy little boys and girls, he in the melancholy idleness of his spirit wished himself one of the web-footed, well-fed animals. A well-known voice roused him to look upon the pale, sharp face of Jaffier Shadowly; grown paler, sharper, since last John saw him.

"How are you,—do you see that bird? I think that 's—yes that *is* the hernshaw. Some Hamlets always say 'hand-saw'—I always keep to hernshaw. By-the-way, speaking of Hamlets, you would'nt think it, I hav'n't come out yet. No: I hav'n't, indeed."

"I fear, Mr. Shadowly, I behaved very ill to you about that play and the story of the hackney-coach: the truth is, I'm very much afraid my master, as he then was, didn't always speak what"—

"Never mind it—don't say a word about it. What are you doing now?" asked Shadowly.

"Nothing," said John, very mopishly.

Shadowly put his hand upon John's shoulder. "You have voice—figure—face."

"Certainly," said Applejohn.

"Then, you sha'n't starve; no—I—I have long wanted to bring up an Horatio according to my own style; just now, I have I think an offer for Hamlet—come with me." John obediently followed his friend, and after some minutes' walk eastward, Mr. Shadowly entered an alley, where he paused at a door, and said with due solemnity—"Here the agent lives."

"Agent! what for?" asked John Applejohn.

"For the true interests of the drama," answered Shadowly: "follow me."

"Stop—stop," cried John; "what is all this—agent for the drama? Does he get places for people out of work?"

"Your question, Mr. Applejohn," said Shadowly, "is put in homely phrase, but I believe it imparts the true character of Mr. Goodfellow's occupation. Follow me, and fear not."

John followed his patron, who conducted him along a dark passage, and up a very winding and very narrow staircase. Halting at the second floor, Mr. Shadowly knocked.

"'Open locks—whoever knocks!'"

was exclaimed in sonorous tones from within. Mr. Shadowly entered the dim apartment, followed by John.

"Mr. Shadowly! The very man who"—

But let us endeavour to describe Mr. Goodfellow. In his youth he had been called a handsome man, and his face at five-and-forty put in strong claims to the compliment. His black hair was flecked with grey, but his eye was full of vivacity, and his mouth expressive of kindliness and good humour. His shirt collar was flung back over what had been a white linen jacket, edged with blue riband; he wore grey trowsers, made for him as it appeared in his more dapper days: russet shoes, with rosettes of faded scarlet worsted, were adapted to slippers. Mr. Goodfellow sat in an arm-chair, where were the remains of whitewash and Dutch metal; and with a huge book opened before him, he was evidently employed on the future fortunes of the good people who formed his levee. The agent rose to greet Mr. Shadowly, and "proud to be introduced to any friend of his," ceremoniously welcomed Mr. Applejohn.

"The very man I was thinking of, Mr. Shadowly; sit down, sir—there, sir; upon that throne," and Goodfellow pointed to a rush-bottomed chair, the rushes much broken. "On that throne, sir." And this, Mr. Goodfellow delivered in a loud ringing voice, and with a manner that would have exalted even a three-legged stool to the dignity of an arm-chair. Indeed, nothing mean and petty seemed to enter into the magnificent mind of Mr. Goodfellow. Everything with him was upon a grand scale; his alchemic tongue would turn pewter pots to gold by the very tone in which he would speak of pewter pots.

"Mr. Goodfellow," began Shadowly, "I want to"—

"I beg your pardon," said the agent, with mingled sweetness and dignity—"I beg your pardon, Mr. Shadowly, but when you entered the mansion, I was engaged with Mr. Strongbow, an illustrious musician, sir, who will by and by when he is somewhat more matured,"—here, Mr. Strongbow, a little withered man of

at least sixty-five, in a thread-bare brown coat, with tarnished buttons, drab breeches, and leather gaiters, bowed to the tragic actor.

It is said that babies feeding at the breast, catch the expression of their mothers. Mr. Viotti Strongbow had lived so long upon his fiddle, had for so many years hugged it to him, that his head and the head of that which fed him were alike as twins. Every bit of his visage was a piece of fiddle—and his voice was the voice of cat-gut. Mr. Strongbow bowed.

"Mr. Strongbow first," said Goodfellow. "You know, Mr. Shadowly, order is Heaven's first law." Mr. Shadowly bowed an acquiescence to the truth, and the agent turned his smiling face to the musician.

"'Twouldn't buy me rosin," said Strongbow.

"The salary, I must say it—is moderate; yes, the remuneration is inadequate. I own it—I blush and own it," said Goodfellow.

"What could the manager mean by offering a musician such a salary?" asked Strongbow.

"The manager," replied Goodfellow, "is a great reader of Roman history,"—

"What of that?" inquired Strongbow.

"And therefore knows that Nero fiddled under great difficulties."

"It's no matter to me," said Strongbow, "what another musician has done. I have had my difficulties too."

"All of us, sir—all of us," said the agent, casting up his eyes, "in this vale of tears."

"And I say, seven shillings a week, and to travel a journey of a hundred and fifty miles is—oh! it can't be done," said Strongbow. "I had rather wear a green shade—put a dog in a string, and go into the street at once."

"No, you would not, Mr. Strongbow—I know too well your love of the art—of its dignity, sir. Seven shillings, I own it, is low: still, you must bear in mind this important fact. In the large and populous district in which the theatre lies,"——

"It isn't a regular built theatre of course?" said Strongbow.

"Why," replied Goodfellow, with one of his sweetest smiles, "why, I believe the manager is bound in his lease to allow a farmer to thrash corn in it."

"Ha! I understand—oh lord!" and the musician groaned, and if possible looked more than ever like his fiddle.

"Still, sir, don't despond—one of the qualities of true genius is hope, sir, hope. I was about to say that in the populous district—populous, though scattered,—there is not, I am credibly

informed, although the people have an embryo passion for music, there is not a single fiddle. Hence, Mr. Strongbow, the advantage of the engagement must press itself upon you: for combining in yourself the whole of the orchestra, when private parties are afoot, you cannot possibly be injured by unprincipled competition."

"There 's something in that—still," cried Strongbow, "seven shillings."

"In the cause of music, sir—in adoration of that immortal maid," said the agent, "I will upon my own responsibility advance a shilling, trusting to my persuasive powers—feeble though they be—to reconcile the manager to the unlooked-for augmentation."

"Eight shillings—well? But you say, it 's a village. I don't know," said the musician, "I had rather it had been a market-town."

"There you are wrong," replied the agent, "permit me to say, very wrong, indeed. Market-towns, Mr. Strongbow, are busy only on market-days; calves or corn once a week. But in villages, sir—in villages, there is an equanimity of disposition among the inhabitants—a serenity of mind I may say, disposing them as much at one time as at another to the patronage of our art."

"I suppose, the manager wouldn't advance a fortnight's salary?" said Strongbow, gloomily.

"Really, Mr. Strongbow," answered Goodfellow, "I think I may venture upon my knowledge of that gentleman's finances to assure you, that such an event comes not within the range of human probability."

"I thought not," said the fiddler.

"Sir, I 'll not pay the ill-compliment to your instinct to suppose you could have thought otherwise," rejoined the agent.

"I don't know,—eight shillings," and the musician hesitated—"it may do in summer, but when winter comes,"—

"Ha!" exclaimed the agent, "then—then will come your harvest: for in that primitive village, Christmas, sir—Christmas is kept in all its ancient splendour. See—see what you 'll make by the waits—they have not heard the waits there these twenty years: there is in that otherwise happy district, an adult generation who have never heard the waits! Mr. Strongbow, in that district, I perceive it—you are destined to be the envied man who shall bring back the simple music of our forefathers."

"Well, I—I think I must close, but I 'll let you know," and the fiddler walked to the door.

"Mr. Strongbow," exclaimed Goodfellow in his loudest voice,

and putting on his most important look—"Mr. Strongbow, I have a duty, 'sir, to fulfil; I must have nothing left to surmise. I send my despatches by the post to-night—I must have a definitive categoric answer."

"I'll let you know in time," said the musician.

"Ere the postman shall strike upon the bell, if you please," said Goodfellow, and the fiddler being gone, the agent turned himself to a slim youth who appeared at the ripe age of seventeen to have grown beyond his strength. His dress was remarkably shabby, but there was an exulting, hopeful spirit in his eye, as he approached the table of the agent. "Now, young gentleman, if you are determined to leave your shop, and turn actor, I—I think I can send you to grass somewhere in Essex."

"Pray, sir," asked the young gentleman, with a very thick lisp, "pray, sir, what is the ighest salary?"

"Why, Mr. Butter, adventurous managers, mark me—adventurous managers, I say—offer for first tragedy fifteen shillings a week: but, sir, I should be wanting in duty to you, myself, and to those gentlemen the managers, did I not without equivocation or mental reservation, assure you that such a sum is perfectly illusory—mark me, sir, perfectly illusory. However, as you are determined to regale your nostrils with the lamps, I can put you in a company where you will have great practice."

"That, Mr. Goodfellow," said the tyro, "is in course my great hobject."

"Great practice, sir; you may do every thing, from Richard the Third to carrying on a table."

"I'm hup in Richard," said Butter.

"And the other," observed the agent, "may be compassed with a very little study."

"I should like the young tragedy and the eroes," said Mr. Butter.

"The patronage of boarding-schools follows as a matter of certainty," said Goodfellow. "Your benefits, sir, may be enormous, but—I deceive no man—they may be most contemptible."

"I'm not a bit afeard," said Butter; "the thing isn't hall together new to me. I've took lessons from Mr. Vimper; and give him seven shillings for a book of Amlet."

"Gracious heavens!" exclaimed Shadowly, "you play Hamlet?"

"Mr. Shadowly, permit me," observed Goodfellow, "to request a taciturnity—a courteous taciturnity." Mr. Shadowly gracefully acknowledged the reproof. "Seven shillings, Mr. Butter, for Hamlet! When that divine emanation of our glorious

and transcendant bard—of that great creature, is given forth to the world, price sixpence?"

"Yes, I know hall that," replied Butter; "but Mr. Vimper marked vhere I vas to throw hup my hies, and lift my harms. He said throwing hup the hies and harms in the proper places was the greatest part of helocution."

"Eyes and arms are useful in our art, I don't deny it. Well, Mr. Butter, as for salary,"—

"Ha! that 's hit," said Butter.

"As a young man you can only expect to enter a commonwealth; that is, a company established on the justest principles, where every person shares according to his merits."

"I can have no hobjection to that," cried Mr. Butter.

"Then, sir, Essex—Essex is your destination. Do you know the county? It offers peculiar advantages to the young aspirant. There are marshes—very many marshes—much water in Essex. Answer me, sir; are you fond of eels?"

Mr. Butter was fond of eels.

"Sir, you 're a happily constituted man. In Essex, you may snap your fingers at fortune—for there, sir, eels abound. Hold yourself in readiness to walk, or if you are luxuriously inclined, and have the money, to ride to Essex on Thursday. Enough, sir; a letter shall be sent to you to-morrow. Stay, sir; you are about to enter upon a thorny, but a most glorious profession."

"I ham," replied Mr. Butter, with great fortitude.

"There are prizes in it, sir—great prizes; somebody must have them. There are blanks also—a very considerable number of blanks; somebody must have them too."

"We all ope for the best," observed Mr. Butter.

"Nobly said, sir; nobly said. But, sir, I was about to give you a little wholesome advice against the guile, the cupidity of rustic landlords. Mr. Butter, you must sometimes have a bed—hay isn't in the fields all the year round, or salaries would be much reduced. Well, sir, it is possible amidst the multitude of human affairs, that if you take a lodging, you may not always have the money to pay for it. Such a calamity has occurred to the very lights of the profession. Now, sir, mark me: under such heart-rending circumstances, you owe a solemn duty to your manager never to go home in your dress,—if that dress be the property of the stock. For strange, incredible as it may appear to you, an unsophisticated creature, blushing on the threshold of active life,—monstrous as the fact may present itself to you, I have positively known a landlord so lost to the feelings of humanity, so callous to every touch of common tenderness, as to detain the costly property thus thoughtlessly placed in his

possession, until every shilling of his avaricious demand upon his unsuspecting victim was paid down upon the nail; aye, sir,—upon the nail!"

"You don't say so?" exclaimed Butter.

"I wonder not, sir, at your simplicity—'tis the concomitant of youth; but, sir, be advised by a man who has had landlords. Pay while you can, sir; but when you can no longer pay, exhibit the purity of your principle—the excellence of your good intentions, and your love of tranquillity—by quietly removing yourself from a roof under which you can no longer rest in peace. Farewell, sir; farewell, and prosper.—Remember, sir, the sandals of John Kemble are not yet occupied."

"You 'll see," replied Mr. Butter, and he quitted the room with the sandals already at his soles.

"And that fellow is to be an actor!" said Mr. Shadowly "And, in the most atrocious way, does he not misplace the *h*—the *w*—the *v*—and"—

"He does; it can't be denied, sir, he does," said the agent; "and yet, sir, he is an honest lad, a very honest lad. He gives you in the course of the night the full number of letters; nay, I know not, if you wait patiently, whether you hav'n't more than the number, by way of interest, for waiting."

"Mr. Goodfellow, as we are now alone, shall we not imbibe?" and Mr. Shadowly took from his pocket a bright half-crown, and held it forth to the agent.

"Sir!" exclaimed Goodfellow, with an expression of arch-wonder in his face, "that is a half-crown! You are out of an engagement, sir—return it to your pocket; put the money in your purse, I say."

"Nay, but Mr. Goodfellow, I insist"—

"A half-crown, sir! I give you my honour, sir, and I speak it not to your disparagement, nor to the disparagement of your friend, whom I have not the felicity of knowing,—but, sir, I pledge you my honour as a gentleman, that I have had six eminent men, most eminent men in the profession, with me this morning,—and yet, sir, I would have defied the united muscular exertion of ten Israelites, exercised upon any one of those men, to have shaken from him half of half-a-crown! Put the money in your pocket, Mr. Shadowly—half-a-crown is not often beheld by the conscious walls of this cabinet. When you are in pay, sir,—yes, when you 're in an engagement"—

"Allgag must come to me—nothing but my Hamlet will save him," said Shadowly.

"Then, sir, come hither, and show me silver or gold, and I will imbibe with you. But now, sir—now, Tom Goodfellow

himself will play the host. What does your friend take?" asked the agent.

"Anything, sir," said Applejohn, who marvelled greatly at the dignity of Goodfellow; "anything, sir, though I want nothing."

"The usual thing, I suppose—we can't do better?" observed Goodfellow to Shadowly, who nodded acquiescence. "What, ho! within there!" exclaimed Goodfellow—"What, ho! I say —Fabuletto!"

In answer to this call, a little boy of some ten years old, one of the twelve children of Goodfellow, ran from the next room. "Yes, father?"

"Fabuletto," said the sire, placing sixpence in the hand of his offspring, "Fabuletto, child—a pot of metropolitan ponderous fluid: and haste thee, good Fabuletto." And in a trice Fabuletto was gone, and returned with a pot of foaming London porter.

"Doubtless, sir, you drink from the metal?" and Goodfellow pressed the beverage upon Applejohn, who drank.

"I will give you, gentlemen," said Shadowly, taking the pewter-pot, "I will give you the regeneration of the drama."

"I would drink that toast, sir," said Goodfellow, seizing the pot, "I would drink it, lacking other liquor, in

'The ruddy drops that visit this sad heart;'"

and the agent emptied the vessel, and reversing it, whilst about three drops trickled to the floor, exclaimed—"Peace! the charm's wound up." He then flung the pot into a corner of the room, and resumed his official chair. "Now, Mr. Shadowly, to business. I have an offer for you, sir; you have staid too long in London, sir; you would be very wrong to play anything but first business."

"Especially to the persons who are now in possession of it. No, sir; I have made up my mind to do nothing second: in a word, not to grind colour for artists who can't paint."

"Very right, sir—very right. Of course, Mr. Shadowly, you can play every leading part?"

"I can play Hamlet," said Shadowly.

"Certainly: but I mean you can play all the first tragedy?"

"I—I flatter myself I can play Hamlet."

"He, sir, is a heathen—a beast—a wretch devoid of sense, who doubts it!" said the agent. "But if another tragedy were put up?"—

"I think no tragedy so good as Hamlet."

"My opinion, Mr. Shadowly—my opinion; 'tis the prime work of the immortal bard. Still, you know other parts—other"—

"I should always prefer playing Hamlet," said the actor.

"As I said, sir, I have an offer for you—an offer not far from the metropolis. You could take all your friends down in stage-coaches, or, perhaps, in a gig."

"I must open in Hamlet—nobody near town has seen it."

"Open in what you please: the town is Greenwich," said the agent.

"Small theatre," observed Shadowly, with sudden melancholy; "very small."

"By no means, Mr. Shadowly—'tis a new theatre—a theatre erected under extraordinary patronage, and for three days only—a most extensive building."

"I must open in Hamlet," said the actor.

"You will find the proprietor of the theatre a most obliging person, and if you can persuade him," said Goodfellow, with his usual gravity, "that Hamlet will suit his purpose as well, or perhaps better than anything else, I have no doubt he 'll do it."

"Well, that 's settled;" and already Shadowly saw himself in the inky suit of the Dane. "Now, how much am I to have?"

Mr. Goodfellow raised his eyes to the face of the actor, smiled, and said—"Sir you 've been too long in London."

"I feel I have—I have wasted my time in solicitation, when, had I gone into the country, I might have brought managers crawling to my feet. But to return to the salary—what am I to have?"

"I am glad, sir, for your own sake—for the cause of the drama, that you are at length awakened to your just value. You have been much wanted in the country, sir. Trust the word of Tom Goodfellow—a word never yet nailed to the counter of public opinion as a bad one. You have been much wanted, sir."

"I think so—I 'm sure so," said Shadowly: "but how much am I to have?"

"In the country you would have been followed—sought for—asked to the mayor's balls—the churchwardens' wives' tea-parties—the—I am glad, Mr. Shadowly, profoundly glad that you have at length determined to migrate into the rural provinces of merry England."

"All my friends have long advised me. But the question is, how much am I to have?"

"In Greenwich, sir, you will find a"—

"But, my dear Goodfellow," and Shadowly laid his hand upon the agent's shoulder, and stared in his face,—"how much am I to have?"

"Oh! I understand you. I perceive—the *pecunia*—the 'last infirmity of noble minds,'—the salary?" said Goodfellow, suddenly enlightened.

"Exactly: how much am I to have?" asked the actor, for the sixth time.

Mr. Goodfellow threw himself back in his chair, folded his arms, and looking sorrowfully at the actor said—"Mr. Shadowly, estimating, as believe me on the faith of a man, I do estimate your extraordinary powers, I should feel myself a beast, if I could tell you."

"You can't tell me what I'm to have?"

"I can't, sir!—My tongue would cleave to my mouth, did I attempt to wound your high-minded ears by giving utterance to the sum proposed."

"What! very low, eh?" asked the actor.

Mr Goodfellow spoke no word, but drew up his features at the question, as if suffering excruciating tooth-ache.

"Still, I have I hope fortitude—let me know the amount—come, speak out," and Shadowly tried to laugh.

"No, sir; not for the worth of this sublunar world would I speak it—but—but, Mr. Shadowly, I will constrain my hand to write down the sum—I will put down the salary in round numbers." On this, the agent wrote on a scrap of paper, and burying his averted face in one hand, with the other, which he made to tremble exceedingly, gave the document to the tragic actor.

Mr. Shadowly took the paper, glanced at it, threw it upon the table, and said—"D—nation!"

"I expected no less from your greatness," said Goodfellow, venturing to look up, "but let not your just displeasure fall on me."

"To offer me such terms—me!" cried Shadowly.

"They are low, sir; degradingly low; and yet, sir," said the agent, "it should not be forgotten that provisions are very cheap at Greenwich. The terms are very low, even for Greenwich; and yet that picturesque borough to the student of human nature presents peculiar recommendations."

"What are they?—I don't know 'em," said Shadowly.

"The pensioners, Mr. Shadowly! If, in the extraordinary changes that I foresee—and from my position I may without vanity say, that I am enabled to foresee much—if, from the changes that the drama must yet undergo, from the vicissitudes that its professors, its highest professors—among whom I of course include Mr. Shadowly—must suffer; if you should be compelled in the 'sere, the yellow leaf' of your days to take to the old men,—mark you not, sir, the advantage you would have over all competitors, from a previous study of the habits, the manners, the bye-play, so to speak, of those picturesque antiques, the pensioners of Greenwich College?"

"Pooh! I—I learn anything from such persons!" exclaimed Shadowly.

"Despise not such instruments, sir! Believe me, in the pursuit of that high calling to which destiny has exalted you—for it is a high calling, sir, the display of human passion,—you may learn a touch of nature, aye, sir, a miraculous touch from the vilest beggar in your path. I will give you, sir, a practical instance of what may be done even at Greenwich. Are you aware, sir, that a gentleman—who shall be nameless—was instructed in every step of his celebrated nautical hornpipe by a pensioner now living in the Hospital? That hornpipe alone, sir, is worth three thousand a year? The actor has marked his sense of its value, by giving to a splendid pile of buildings at Hastings, of which he is the happy proprietor, the significant name of Hornpipe Crescent! Despise not Greenwich, Mr. Shadowly."

"But the salary—the salary."

"It is low! Still let me hope you have not forgotten the collateral advantages?"

"I don't know—I—after all," said Shadowly, "it would be worth something to show that rascal Allgag that I *can* get a situation."

"That feeling of triumph," exclaimed the agent, with great animation, "would alone be worth twenty pounds per week. When—when he has lost you, Mr. Shadowly, then—then will come his sense of your value; then will begin his everlasting remorse. Shall I say you accept the offer?"

"Hang it!" cried the tragedian, "the salary is an insult."

"Disabuse thy mind of that, I pray thee gentle coz,—think not so hardly of the manager. I know the man—the meekest, best of creatures. 'Tis not his estimation of your genius that offers the salary: 'tis not his mind that speaks, but—alas!—his pocket. I can perceive, Mr. Shadowly, by the varied expression of your countenance, that you will take the man's offer."

"Be it as you will," said Shadowly.

"Your hand, sir," exclaimed the agent, rising to grasp it. "'Tis done. You will have a multitudinous audience. By-the way, I had forgotten to state, that the salary is only for three days—it is not to be considered for the week."

"That materially alters the sum," said Shadowly, "that doubles it. Ha! a very different thing: I play only three times for"—

"More than three times," replied the agent.

"More than three in three nights?" asked the actor; "how is it possible?"

"Why, you will be convinced of the popularity of the drama in Greenwich, when I inform you that at this season of the year

—you will open on Whit Monday—the manager has played, and every time to overflowing audiences, not less than twenty times a day. Call you not that encouragement of the drama?" asked the agent.

"Twenty times! Why, what theatre is it? What 's it called?"

"It might be called, from its proximity to that lovely place, it might be called the Park Theatre. Think of Greenwich Park," said Goodfellow—"fine historical associations about it; Queen Elizabeth used to hunt there."

"Is it a regularly constructed theatre—regularly built?" inquired the tragedian.

"Built with the greatest care; it is put up and taken down again like clock-work."

"What! is it moveable?"

The agent smiled, and said—"Thespis began in a cart, Mr. Shadowly; and I should be guilty of an affectation, I trust foreign to my character, were I to attempt to deny that the theatre of which I speak is carried away from place to place in sundry waggons."

"You surely do not mean, Mr. Goodfellow, to insinuate that the theatre is—a—a booth at a fair?"

"At this festive season of the year," answered the agent, "the nymphs and swains make holiday. The drama is not merely a harmless, it is an instructive recreation: you will have the proud satisfaction of blending tuition with amusement, for the benefit of thousands of your common species."

"But in a booth—in a common booth—with walls of canvas!" exclaimed Shadowly.

"I am told sir," observed the agent, "that the great Greek tragedians—I do not read Greek myself—always acted in the open air."

"What might suit the Greeks," observed the English actor, "would be extremely disreputable in a British artist. Act in a booth! As I have said, to canvas walls!"

"At first, when I was solicited to become agent for the manager, let me confess it, Mr. Shadowiy, I thought as you do. What! said I to myself—I! Tom Goodfellow—I who have expended my best energies in support of the true drama—I, who every week, send youths—young, callow missionaries of considerable promise—into the most remote corners of this extensive empire, to disseminate a taste for the true theatre, to preach Shakspeareanity—I have a letter here, sir, from a haberdasher's apprentice, a youth sent by me to the Isle of Skye; he has played Richard there."—

"Has he ever played Hamlet?" asked Shadowly.

"Not yet; but he has played Richard and Coriolanus three

times, and speaks in the highest terms of the docility of the natives. Nay, he is so much pleased with the people, that having left his trunk behind, he has conformed to the insular prejudice, and wears a kilt. But, sir, I am wandering from my theme.—As I said, I felt as you feel with respect to the Greenwich Theatre. In the vanity, the ignorance of my heart, I thought the agency beneath me: but, sir, a little cool philosophy set all right. I thought with you of the canvas walls—of a theatre built without the aid of a single brick. And what, said I, my better mind coming to me,—does the artist, does the true actor, the genius, the mighty mover of the passions depend upon the materials, the insensible materials that form the building? Am I an agent for bricks and mortar—or for the throbbing sons of genius? Am I to estimate an actor by trowel-work? Are the wondrous depths of tragedy to be measured with a carpenter's chalk-line? Perish the folly! I exclaimed—it is the man and not the building. If the actor ride in his carriage, does his carriage elevate the art?—No: for it is the art that has given him the vehicle. As genius is an endowment which no money can purchase, it is therefore above all the extraneous advantages obtainable by lucre. A diamond is a diamond, though you shall put it on the finger of a beggar."

"That's very true—very true, indeed," said Applejohn, venturing to speak.

"It is true, sir," observed Mr. Shadowly, "only permit me to say, that on the finger of a beggar, nobody would believe it to be a diamond. Why, sir, does not mendicant genius every day offer the 'precious jewel in its head' for sale—and yet, because the holder is mendicant, does not the world believe the jewel to be of no value? Men, sir, have died with jewels in their brains; and not until the men were dead, were the gems owned to be of the true water.—Now, when I am dead, why then my Hamlet will be confessed the"—

"It is already confessed, sir, by men who know what Hamlet is, to be prodigious: but then, sir, the judgment of the few is but a razor against that block of stupidity called public taste: time, sir—time is wanted to cut through the stone. But, sir, the time will come when your Hamlet will be a household thing," said Goodfellow.

"Do you think so?" asked Shadowly, touched by the energy of the agent.

"Think so! We shall have your image, sir, in pottery—we shall see your Hamlet upon twelfth-cakes with a sugar-plum skull in his hand. But, sir, you must be seen to be appreciated. Now, sir, the Greenwich Whitsuntide Theatre will hold a thousand

people: you will play Hamlet—that is all the marrow of him —fifteen times a day for three days. I will not pay you so ill a compliment as to conceive that the house will not be crammed. Now, sir, see what you have done! You have played Hamlet to five-and-forty thousand people."—

"So many?" asked Shadowly, moved by the flattering prospect.

"No—I am wrong: of course, many will see you repeat the part seven or eight times; it will not always be entirely a new audience: I will deduct five thousand for enthusiasts. Well, sir, with that deduction, see what you have done! You have inoculated forty thousand people with the divine *virus* of your Hamlet, and sent them loose upon society to spread your reputation! Ha? what say you now, Mr. Shadowly!" and Goodfellow looked upon the tragedian as all his own.

"It would be a great triumph to be carried on the very back of the public to the London house," said Shadowly.

"John Bull, sir, is slow to rouse, but when he is roused," observed the agent, "there is no knowing where his tricks will stop."

"People can't know what my Hamlet is, unless they see it. And yet, do adequate judges attend the"—

"The Greenwich Whitsuntide Theatre? The best, sir, for there is a very—very limited free-list, and that on the days and nights of your performance will of course be suspended. Besides, it is a well-known fact, that several managers make it a point of their professional religion to attend the theatre to look out for rising talent. Mr. Flyblow—you know him—great man for the Newgate Calendar, always goes to Greenwich; but in disguise, that he mayn't look too much like a gentleman. Well, Mr. Shadowly, what shall we say?"

"Why, egad! I—I have a great mind—the salary is sure, of course—I have a great mind, if only for the freak."—

"Henry the Fifth, sir, played his youthful pranks, why should not you? I shall write to Mr. Phœnix directly, informing him of his good fortune. You are lucky, sir—lucky in one another. And now, sir;" and the agent turned to Applejohn, "what may I have the paramount felicity of doing for you?"

"Oh! I was about to say," observed Shadowly, "don't you think he would do for something? At present, he is nearly starving."

"All in his favour," answered Goodfellow, "if he would adopt the stage; for he has nothing to lose, except his hunger, which to be sure, may be somewhat difficult to get rid of."

"What should you like to act, Applejohn?" asked Shadowly.

"I! lord bless you! Nothing," cried John. "I should die to think of it."

"Don't think of it, sir," said the agent, "but die first. If you have an honest calling, sir, stick to it—if,—what have you there, Spalatro?" and Goodfellow addressed himself to a little boy, another son, who entered, carrying in his hand a neck of mutton. "What is that, Spalatro?"

"Mutton, papa—mother bought it," answered Spalatro."

"Put it in the buttery," said Goodfellow—"what, ho! come hither, sirrah? What meanest thou by this?" and the agent pointed to a play-bill which half enveloped the joint. "What is this, sirrah?"

"A play-bill, papa," said Spalatro.

"And is it thus, sir, that you desecrate the archives of our art? Speak, sirrah! is it thus?"—

"The butcher wrapt it up," answered the boy.

"Enough! his soul is untouched by the softer influences of the profession; but had I a thousand sons, I would disinherit them all did I apprehend them in so barbarous an act. In the buttery," and Goodfellow waved the boy hence. "The fair—I mean the Greenwich Whitsun Theatre opens on Monday; you will be punctual?"

"Depend upon me, sir; and on the receipt of the salary, I will pay your fee, but"—

"Speak not of it, sir: we are gentlemen both; what I expect, you will confer. No more words, sir. Farewell, and may the gods of Rome watch over and protect you!"

Applejohn and the tragedian quit Mr. Goodfellow, who in due time sits down to his neck of mutton. And should some destitute, way-faring actor make a call whilst a morsel of mutton shall lie upon the dish, somewhat of that morsel will be set before him, sweetened and recommended by a hearty welcome.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Beware, sir, beware of modesty," was the counsel of Shadowly to Applejohn, as side-by-side they walked down the Kent-road. "Beware of the rock modesty; I have almost wrecked my fortunes on it."—John to the pressing solicitations of Shadowly to turn actor, urged his utter ignorance of the art, his want of taste for it, with many other disqualifications; still, the tragedian would not be thus answered: he insisted upon the infallibility of his own judgment, which assured him that John Applejohn was

destined to make a very showy figure in the future history of the English stage.

"Bless your heart!" cried the simple John, "in such matters, you can't think what a fool I am; I'm worth nothing."

"Never say that—never own it, though it should be the truth. When a man tells the world he's worth nothing, the world always takes him at his own valuation."

Mr. Shadowly found in John Applejohn a most deferential admirer, and patronised him accordingly. The praise of John—rapt, astonished by the passionate speeches of the actor—was delicious incense to the nostrils of Shadowly, starving for admiration. The actor declaimed, and John vowed that never in his whole life had his nature been so moved, elevated—never had he caught such glimpses of poetic light!

"I 'm sure, Mr. Shadowly," said John, the actor having finished one of Hamlet's soliloquies—"I 'm sure, sir, you make me feel proud of myself, that you think me fit for your companion—me, who am a poor ignorant fellow, knowing nothing."

"I'll make a man of you, John: yes, you shall be the first Horatio of the day."

"I can't hope it, sir," and John shook his head.

"The first Horatio, as I am the first Hamlet: we 'll storm the town and take it together. I 'll read all Hamlet to you—the whole of the tragedy left in the hackney-coach," said Shadowly, with a significant laugh.

"Now, what could have made that man deal in such wicked lies?" observed John, reminded of the poetic vapourings of the young tailor.

"What? Why, a strange and ravenous desire for praise," said the actor. "Of all weaknesses, perhaps, the most absurd and ridiculous; a folly that makes a man a laughing-stock to all the world. But step out, John; we have little time to lose: I have a thousand things to settle with Phœnix, for it isn't often that he has an artist like myself, eh, John?"

"No, indeed, sir; I don't know much about it, but"—

"That 's why I value your applause, John: you are not hackneyed in the ways of criticism; no, no; when I move you, I feel that I have struck upon the natural note of passion—I feel that I have done what only real genius can do, eh, John?"

"You may say that, sir."

"It 's easy enough to play conventional tricks—to have a set grin—to gargle your throat with syllables—to shake your head—to stand and roll your eyes, and then to tap your forehead, as if there was something there too great to come out,—all such pranks are easily played, and catch the admirers of a certain

school.—But I hope I know how to despise all such antics. I hope that, taking the divine goddess nature for my guide, I arrive at the sources of feeling by simple, dignified, unerring means—eh, John ?"

"You do, indeed, sir. I never heard anything like it ; never."

"I believe not : yet, I must say, John, if there was more unsophisticated nature among audiences, more of that pure, natural intelligence, of which you possess so much"—

"Not I, sir—I 'm sure, sir, I know nothing."

"Know, nothing, John ! What would I give to play before a pit full of such ignorance ? Then my Hamlet might hope for fair dealing, then its peculiar originality might gain due reward."

"And it must, sir ; depend upon it, Mr. Shadowly, it must. If it 's all as good as the bits you 've said to me,"—

"Much better, John ; very much better."

"Then it must be the noblest thing that human creature ever listened to."

"That 's not the point, John ; I was merely about to say, that I would back your opinion on acting—your simple, uneducated opinion in all its natural freshness,—against the voices of ten thousand. Believe me, John," and Mr. Shadowly took his companion's hand, "believe me, I think you the finest judge of natural acting,—I say, natural acting, that I ever met with. I say this ; and I flatter no man."

Pursuing this pleasant discourse, the two friends arrived at that point of Greenwich allotted by authority to the sports of Whitsun merry-makers. The theatre—the principal dramatic establishment in the fair—presented itself to the lofty looks of the tragedian. He paused, and had inward wrestlings with his dignity —the struggle lasted but a few seconds, for putting his hands in his pockets, he there found conquering odds. He approached the unfinished building—he would not think it a booth—and mounting the steps, saw the proprietor Phœnix superintending "the clink of hammers."

"My name, sir, is Shadowly," said the actor, with a dignity that inferred he had said all that could be said. He repeated to the unmoved Phœnix—"Shadowly."

Mr. Phœnix was a big, burly man ; with a round yellow face, small eyes winking in pits of flesh, the nose of a bull-dog, and the mouth of a fish. He wore a loose white coat, red waistcoat, corded breeches, and top-boots. A gold chain, dangled from his fob gave token of the man of wealth. He also displayed a large brooch of hair—the relic of a first love, a slack-wire dancer, twenty years deceased, — surrounded with superb brilliants.

Mr. Phœnix looked at the tragedian with the same intelligence that may be suddenly lighted up in the face of an ox.

"Shadowly, sir;" repeated the actor.

"Is it," observed the proprietor—"and what of that?"

"The name is of course, known to you?" and Mr. Shadowly bent himself back.

"Oh! ha! well, how d' ye do? to be sure," and Phœnix nodded a familiar welcome.

"I believe, Mr. Phœnix, I may without vanity say I have made some noise in the world," said the actor.

"By what I 've heard, pretty well. I was sorry to hear of your misfortune in London," observed Phœnix.

"'Tis no matter, sir," replied Shadowly, believing of course that the proprietor alluded to the brutality of the manager. "It 's no matter, sir. I appeal from Allgag to Phœnix; and have no fear of the result. When can we rehearse?"

"Whenever you like—you've brought all your traps with you?" asked Phœnix.

"They will be here per coach. The young lady who will play with me, I"—

"By-the-bye,—how is she? She was only a baby when I first come into the profession. Times is changed with some of us. Ha! I 'm not too proud to own it—but I started in life with nothing to my back but a learned pig."

"Doubtless," said Shadowly, recurring to his immediate interests, "doubtless the young lady has played Ophelia?"

"Ha! eight-and-twenty years ago—how the time does pass!—she was showed in a caravan: I recollect, she was the very first Spotted Girl as come out."

"Is it possible!" exclaimed Shadowly—"a Spotted Girl?"

"Yes, and when that went off—for the public is so very variable,—she was a wild Zealander—and then a mermaid—and then she took to the rope, and warn't it a little after that, when you married her?"

"I—I marry a—a Spotted Girl!" exclaimed Hamlet.

"My friend's a bachelor, sir," said Applejohn.

"Pray, Mr. Phœnix, do you know who I am—I ask you, sir,—who I am?"

"Why, Jack Shakerly, isn't it"—

"Shakerly!"

"Ha! Shakerly, as married little Nancy Tumtum the Spotted Girl?—I heard she'd run away from you in London with the Wild Man from Madagascar—but I 'spose you 've took her back?"

"And pray, sir,"—it was with heroic strength of mind that

Shadowly subdued his mounting rage,—"pray, sir, am I to understand that you expect a Mr. John Shakerly and his wife, late Nancy Tumtum, the original Spotted Girl? Do such persons make part of your company?"

"Well! I thought," said Phœnix, shading his eyes with his hand, and staring at the tragic actor, "I thought if you was Jack Shakerly, you wasn't half the fine fellow you used to be, when you was the Indy Conjuror. I thought so," and Mr. Phœnix made no other reply.

"I come, sir," said Shadowly, and he frowned, "armed with the introduction of Mr. Goodfellow, agent."

"Oh! I see—you 're the tip-top chap he wrote about?" said Phœnix, and Shadowly with a sickly smile acknowledged the homely compliment. "Well, I'm glad to see you: but, it 's only fair in me to tell you that you 'll have your work to do."

"I am aware, Mr. Phœnix, of the arduous task imposed upon me."

"You come after a great favourite, I can tell you. Never was no one liked more than Bill Gale: something like an actor—took a pride and pleasure in his business, as you may judge when I tell you he broke three blood-vessels in three months."

"I trust, Mr. Phœnix, to achieve equal triumphs by wholly different means. Pray, how much do you act of Hamlet?"

"Why, as for Hamlet, you see we've taken the ghost out of it, and put him in a better piece of our own, and that 's all we do of it."

"Not play Hamlet!" exclaimed Shadowly.

Mr. Phœnix thrust his hands in his pockets, and sucking his teeth, tranquilly asked—"Do you want to ruin me?"

Here the tragedian took Melpomene to witness, that no power in this sublunar world, no reward to be enjoyed in this transitory existence, should induce him to play anything less than Hamlet; whilst on the other hand, the manager spoke in terms of very equivocal respect of Shakspeare and all his works, and more especially of the bantling prince of Denmark. A compromise was at length effected; the negotiation being greatly assisted by the state of Shadowly's finances. It was finally agreed, that the actor should play the part in the drama written expressly by the author for the Greenwich Whitsuntide Theatre, the tragedian securing to himself the full privilege of introducing as much of the language of Hamlet as would harmonise with the mind and feelings of a Barbary corsair, such being the original character in the forthcoming dramatic poem. This treaty was no sooner concluded than the dramatist of the booth —he was, rare union! dramatist and money-taker too,—ventured to appeal against the measure.

"I tell you what, sir," said the dramatist, approaching the stolid Phœnix—"I tell you what, sir; I have my bread to get as well as Shakspeare—choose between us, if you please; all Shakspeare or all me, but I stand no partnerships."

Mr. Phœnix was a very powerful man: and his decision was equal to his strength. Therefore, the dramatist had no sooner delivered himself of his "unalterable determination," than Mr. Phœnix laid his hand upon the bard's collar, with startling dexterity turned him round, and applying his foot to that region where, when Minerva kept a sixpenny day-school on Olympus she applied the birch, he sent the poet down a flight of steps, calling him a son of—not the muses; and telling him to go to that place which we all earnestly hope to avoid, as soon as he could conveniently reconcile himself to the journey. The dramatist alighted on the head of the great drum. "Not the first time you've been saved by my music," cried the satirical drummer, at the time assisting in the erection of the orchestra.

"I trust, sir, that some of the soliloquies which I shall feel it my duty to introduce," said Shadowly, "will not be found too long?"

"Don't trouble yourself at all about that," said Phœnix; "'cause if they are, depend upon it, there'll be somebody polite enough in front to tell you to cut 'em short. And pray, what line are you in?" and the proprietor addressed himself to John. "What are you?"

"I'm nothing," said John, modestly.

"I beg your pardon,—he is a young man of very great promise," said Shadowly, "and if you would only give him an appearance,"—

"Quite full," replied Phœnix, to the great relief of Applejohn; "but I tell you what, could you eat raw beef?"

"I prefer it cooked," answered John.

"But I mean in the way of business—because Solomon's cannibal has struck for wages, and you may have an opening in his caravan. I think, young man, you'd do very well for a cannibal—Solomon gives seven shillings a day besides the raw meat. There's his van over there," and Mr. Phœnix pointed to a huge green vehicle.

"Thank you, Mr. Phœnix—thank you, sir," said Shadowly, and taking Applejohn by the arm, the actor prepared to drag his passive friend down the steps.

"Stop, sir—stop; we begin at five, and you hav'n't got your part," said the showman to Shadowly.

"Depend on me, sir; an extraordinary study—get every line of it while I'm pulling off my boots," said Shadowly, and he hurried

away, carrying Applejohn with him. When fairly out of the hearing of Phœnix, the actor said very confidentially to John—"Now, mark me; not one line do you hear from me that isn't in Hamlet: a Barbary corsair! Yes, you 'll see how I 'll civilise him.—But John," and Shadowly pausing before Solomon's van, contemplated the human and inhuman wonders painted thrice the size of life, and exhibited as the exterior sign of the rarities to be seen for one penny within,—"John, this really promises something."

"Don 't be deceived; bless you, there 's nothing like that when you get inside," said John, "I 've been cheated too often."

"Pooh! pooh! I mean, John, that with tolerable dressing—and if you 'll pledge yourself to keep the service a secret from all mankind, I 'll mark your face for you—with very little pains, you 'd make a much better cannibal than that," and Shadowly pointed to the portrait of a wild man with pink flesh, and hair descending to the toes, holding a live rabbit to his jaws.

"What *do* you mean, Mr. Shadowly?" asked John.

"I mean, without flattery to assert, that if you 'll give your natural qualifications proper play, there 's not a cannibal in the fair that can stand against you. John, you 're a lucky fellow—here 's an opening that mayn't occur to a man in your situation once in his life."

"You really never mean, Mr. Shadowly, to advise me to show myself as a wild man, and eat raw meat?"

"And why not? Doesn't the philosophy of life tell you that raw meat is infinitely better than no meat at all? Cookery, when all is said, is nothing more than a prejudice; one of the effeminate inventions of extreme civilisation."

"I—I can't answer all you say," replied John, modestly, "but I 'd rather starve, Mr. Shadowly, as a decent Christian, than get my bread by turning half-naked cannibal."

"Starve!" echoed Shadowly, and looking with melancholy eyes on John, the actor asked—"do you know what starvation is? Don't talk of it,—but follow me this instant. I insist that"—

"Ha! What—Hamlet! all full—not an engagement to be had—just hired a wild man—great pity—very man!"

"Mr. Oldjoe!" exclaimed Applejohn, as that eccentric vintner descended the steps of the caravan, followed by a well-dressed boy of about ten years old,—"I hope, Mr. Oldjoe that"—

"Quite well; never better—for a plain young man, and you know, Mr. Shadowly, I never boasted of my beauty,—never could look better. Don't go in—don't think of going in," said

Oldjoe, laying his hand on Shadowly's shoulder, "now I and my little boy have come out, there 's nothing worth seeing."

"Your little boy, Mr. Oldjoe?" asked Shadowly.

"Child of my mind—offspring of my immortal part—you don't know it; but this little boy 's a great man," said Oldjoe.

"Not an English child, eh?" asked Shadowly.

"Look at his open face,—tallow, hemp, and hides, eh? Hush! he 's a Russian prince," said Oldjoe, confidentially, "I 'm his tutor; hence, as I say, he 's offspring of my mind."

"A Russian prince!" cried Applejohn, "is it possible, sir?"

"His father 's now at my house; the celebrated Prince Kickhisownwhiskeroff; with his wife, the Princess Kickherownwhiskeroff, and their daughters, Catharine and Elizabeth Kicktheirownwhiskersoff—sweet girls; one of 'em—but it isn't for me to betray the tenderness of a lady."

"And you are the young gentleman's tutor?" asked Shadowly.

"I have taken upon myself to teach him the beauties of the English Constitution; and so, with the consent of the prince, his papa, I 've brought him down to Greenwich Fair. Nice, docile little fellow! Such affection—such sweetness of temper! Do you know why we went into that caravan? You 'd hardly believe it in a child: when he looked upon the pictures outside, he burst into tears at the Swiss giantess, and would have it she was his own wet-nurse that he 'd left at St. Petersburgh: took the dear baby in to pacify him; whilst there—he didn't think I heard him—I listened to the proprietor making an engagement with a Spitalfields weaver for a new cannibal."

"What a pity!" exclaimed Shadowly, turning to Applejohn—"we 're too late."

"Why, you never wanted the engagement?" asked Oldjoe—"Hamlet come to raw beef?"

"I, sir!" shouted Shadowly, "No! sir—I trust, Mr. Oldjoe, when fortune comes to the worst, that I have sufficient magnanimity to starve."

"Always thought you a spirited fellow," said Oldjoe; "always said too that Allgag didn't use you well—but you shouldn't mind that, and for this reason—he uses nobody well. Come, Paul, my dear; you must go in the round-about," and Oldjoe was moving on.

"Prince Paul Kickhisownwhiskeroff in a roundabout!" cried the astonished Shadowly.

"To be sure; you mayn't know it—but little Paul may some day be a cabinet minister in his own country: can't begin the round-about too early. Besides, as I said to his papa this morning—'Kickyourownwhiskeroff,' said I, 'of course you 'd wish his

highness to know all the ramifications '—that 's not a bad word, is it ?—' all the ramifications of English politics ? ' On which, Kick. lifted up his shoulders, and made a sound with his mouth as if he was blowing soup—' I thought you would,' said I; and therefore, Mr. Hamlet, in the round-about Prince Paul goes."

"But, Mr. Oldjoe," cried Shadowly, "I presume the young prince has never seen me act ? Allow me to state that in compliance with the wishes, frequently expressed, of the nobility, gentry, and public of Greenwich, I have consented to appear for a limited number of days at a "—

"Booth ?" observed Oldjoe.

"Theatre !" exclaimed Shadowly, "under the most respectable and liberal patronage that "—

"I tell you what, Mr. Shadowly: I have a respect for your talents, and as you are one of the sights of the fair, I shall feel that I have not fulfilled my duty to Prince Paul Kickhisown-whiskeroff if he quits Greenwich without seeing you."

"Mr. Oldjoe, though we have met but once before, I then considered your judgment to be "—

"Exactly," said Oldjoe, interrupting the actor—"exactly. And now can you inform me—but were you ever at Bartlemy Fair ?"

"Allow me to say," replied Shadowly, with dignified emphasis —"never. This is my first appearance at "—

"I didn't mean that," said Oldjoe.

"I thought you wished to ask about my Hamlet ?" observed Shadowly.

"Not I, indeed," said Oldjoe; "I wanted to ask you a question concerning sausages. I wished particularly to know if sausages of precisely the same swinish character—cooked by elderly ladies —and partaken of under the open sky by the lower orders, were to be had at Greenwich ?"

"I think not—I 've seen none, sir," said Applejohn.

"That 's a pity—or otherwise I should certainly have treated the little Prince Paul to a sample of real old English hospitality. However, Mr. Shadowly, to return to your Hamlet. We have now various engagements; the first is for his highness to try his fortune in the lucky-bag; as an infant politician, who knows what 's in store for him ? Stop—the round-about first,—no, not so; the round-about as a politician he may take according to circumstances. Next, he must have at least a pennyworth of sticks: he may knock down a tobacco-box, and save it until his years of discretion—after that, he must visit the gypsies; then he must ring-the-bull; then take a lesson in the curious and

interesting game of pea-and-thimble, the whole to conclude with the learned pig, and "—

"I don't think there is a learned pig," said Applejohn.

"All the better for you, Mr. Shadowly," said Oldjoe; "for I can tell you, we shall then have a better chance of seeing your Hamlet."

"Sir," observed the actor, "as he is to come after the pig, the Prince of Denmark is much obliged to you."

"Egad! Prince of Denmark—so he is! I'd forgotten—I'm afraid we can't come. The fact is, the Kicktheirownwhiskersoff family and the Crown of Denmark have an old grudge between them: I'm not much of a politician; but I think, yes I think it's about an old right of catching mermaids in the Baltic, and pickling them for the London market."

"You are pleasant, Mr. Oldjoe," observed Shadowly, with a contemptuous look.

"Always was from a child," answered Oldjoe. "I'm sorry for the mermaids—very sorry; but so it is, you see—I can't go against family prejudices. If, now, you could play and dress Hamlet as the Emperor of Austria, the prince might take it as a compliment, and "—Mr. Shadowly turned away—"you won't? Very well—always the case with geniuses—will do things their own way. I turned off a waiter yesterday who was a genius—would knock off the necks of his bottles, because he said 'twas beneath a genius to draw corks."

"I—I beg your pardon," said Applejohn, hanging at the skirts of Oldjoe, "but have you heard anything of my old master, Mr. Gruelthorpe?"

"Ha! there, sir—there," said Oldjoe, stopping short, and addressing himself to Shadowly, "there's a fatal instance of prejudice; beware of it, Mr. Shadowly. I've scarcely time to —Paul, my dear," and Oldjoe stopped and spoke affectionately to little Kickhisownwhiskeroff—"Paul, my dear, if you must eat that chanticleer-in-trowsers,"—

"What do you call it?" asked Shadowly, staring at the gallinaceous gilt gingerbread in the hands of the Russian Prince. "Chanticleer-in-trowsers!"

"I assure you," said the solemn Oldjoe, "the name in polite circles.—Didn't you hear of that dreadful case of suicide? A lovely girl of eighteen, a nursery-maid in a noble family, flung herself into the Thames."

"When! what for?" asked the tender-hearted Applejohn.

"Last Easter," replied Oldjoe very seriously. "She had been with the children to the fair, and bestowing upon them gingerbread like that in the hands of his Highness—wipe it off, and

don't suck the gold, love, if you must eat the bird,—yes, giving each of them just such a cake, she unfortunately gave with it the vulgar name. There was a talk of taking her before a magistrate for corrupting youth—the tutor of the family said that one Socrates had been made to drink bitters for no greater an offence; however, she was only turned away; when, she was so haunted by her conscience, that she drowned herself in the Thames. There was of course an inquest on the body."

"Is it really true?" inquired John.

"True!" cried Oldjoe with a stern look,—"I was foreman of the jury."

"But, Mr. Oldjoe, you spoke something of the danger of prejudice?" said Shadowly.

"I did, sir—listen to a tale of blighted love. Mr. Benjamin Gruelthorpe—I 'm sorry, John, to have heard what I did of you. I thought you an honest man, but it 's clear, faces are made differently now—don't speak—I haven't time to hear you. Well, sir, Mr. Gruelthorpe—lay this story to your heart,—was in youthful life a pawnbroker; perhaps, you have met him? Never mind; his father died, and left him a heap of money—'tis but a few months since—a heap of money. He went to Paris, fell in love with an English lady of rank and title, and everything was settled. He had as I say a heap of money, and there were no questions asked. Being one day with the lady of his love, her mamma requested him to put a shawl upon Emily: in a moment of abstraction, he took the shawl, but instead of laying it on the alabaster shoulders of his mistress, he, no doubt thinking of bygone times, held up the article to the light, and stood looking at the shawl, as looks a pawnbroker. Nothing was said at the time," continued Oldjoe in a solemn voice, "but inquiries were set afoot, when the pawnbroker was discovered in Benjamin Gruelthorpe, Esq., and by means of a letter, written in a crowquill hand on pink paper, politely requested to forget the number of Emily's house. Now, sir, there 's the effect of early prejudice."

"And what became of my young master?" inquired Applejohn very anxiously.

"When I was last in Paris, John, I endeavoured to discover. Walking towards Notre Dame with my friend Victor Hugo—'Vic,' said I, 'either my dear departed French tutor Têtedeveau, he was an emigrant duke—I've known two or three Dukes Têtedeveaus—who lived at Turnham Green when I went to school, either he misinformed my youthful mind, or not far distant from the towers of Notre Dame stands the Morgue. It was remarkable, but Hugo with little hesitation said—'*C'est*

vrai;' and what was most strange, he at the same moment pointed to the edifice. I entered the Morgue"—

"Isn't that the place,"—began Shadowly.

"It is," interrupted Oldjoe, "the place for the waifs and strays of death. I made every inquiry there for Benjamin; and discovered to my considerable grief that an English gentleman with the recent marks of a pawnbroker had been buried from that benevolent establishment only three weeks before."

"Did you hear nothing more of Mr. Gruelthorpe,—nothing more certain?" asked Applejohn.

"Nothing at that time; but I received a letter yesterday from Dusseldorf informing me that Mr. Benjamin Gruelthorpe was at that moment residing there in the best of health, and in much better spirits."

"Why, then, all you 've been telling us about his probable death"—

"I know what you were going to say, Mr. Shadowly; but permit me to remark as a gentleman—how fond these foreigners are of our gold!—look at the little prince, if he hasn't licked the gingerbread bare; how they do swallow our gold to be sure!—but I was about to remark, that we are now come to the exact minute when it will give me inexpressible satisfaction to wish you a very good day."

Mr. Shadowly instantly stopped, and with a lofty air was about to make doubtless a very dignified speech, when Oldjoe patted him upon the shoulder, and observed—"Sorry, very sorry that the pickled mermaids won't let me hear your Hamlet; but if, as I said, you could only make it the Emperor of Austria, I should be too happy. Now, Paul, my dear," and Oldjoe, without deigning another word to the actor, addressed himself to the little Russian—"now, Paul, there is first the lucky-bag—then the sticks—then the ringing-the-bull—then the round-about—ha! won't you think of me when you 're prime minister?—and last of all, if you 're a very good prince, and keep your hands clean, you shall be rewarded with a swing."

At this moment the prince, pointing to a circle of men, exclaimed—"Oh! oh! oh!"

"Paul, I see it," was the prediction of Oldjoe, "I see it—you 'll be a great man and a greater minister. My little love, that is one of our venerable institutions; that is a game originally invented by the first rulers of the world, and used very much among the Druids: that institution is no other than the thimble-rig!" The boy looked up at Oldjoe, who composing his features, said—"May it please your highness, pronounce thimble-rig."

The juvenile Prince Kickhisownwhiskeroff stared in the face of

Oldjoe, and, for a first experiment, pronounced the words with a very creditable accent. "Say it again," said Oldjoe, when the prince repeated the words. "Ha!" exclaimed Oldjoe, patting the cheek of the prince, "oughtn't your country to give me a pension? Well, well, I suppose I must be content with an order or two. If, my dear, your father should ask you what you think I'd prefer, you may say the black eagle. And now—hush!—here is the table—here the professors! You now behold the boast of Britons—the real thimble-rig!"

Shadowly and Applejohn were about to join the lookers-on at the table, when they were accosted by an almost breathless messenger despatched in search of them by Mr. Phœnix.

"He can't want me," said Applejohn.

"He does, though," said the messenger. "I can tell you, we're ruined without you."

"There must be some mistake," said John to the actor.

"None at all," replied Shadowly, and grasping the arm of Applejohn, he led him back to the booth.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Applejohn had no sooner mounted the platform, than Mr. Phœnix ran forward to greet him. "You hav'n't settled for the wild man?"

"Certainly not," said John. "I tell you, I'd starve first. I'm not without a shilling yet, and"—at this moment John placed his hand in his pocket, but immediately started and turned as pale as if a reptile there had stung him.

"What 's the matter—are you ill?" asked Shadowly.

"Not a penny—as I 'm a Christian, not a penny!" said Applejohn. "The lord forgive him, whoever he is!—but whilst we stood gaping before the van, some thief has picked my pocket—seven and six-pence, as I hope to be saved."

"Never mind—I 'll fill your pocket for you," said Mr. Phœnix; who thereupon taking a studied view of John's anatomy, exclaimed in a burst of admiration—"why, you are the very thing, and not a shade of mistake!"

"I can't do anything," cried the modest John, "upon my word, I can't."

"Ten shillings a day," said Phœnix aside to Shadowly, "and he must do it."

"Let the skin be brought after us," said the actor in a low

voice to Phœnix; and then to Applejohn—"John, follow me." Our hero, humbled by his recent loss, desponding at his present state of destitution, obeyed without a word the mandate of the actor; and speedily found himself behind the scenes, among a crowd of artists preparing for the business of the time.

"Gentlemen," said the actor, "my name is Shadowly; the name is, I trust, a sufficient introduction. I greet ye as brethren—men devoted like myself to an elevated art! Enough for myself. I have now, gentlemen, in obedience to the wishes of Mr. Phœnix, to introduce to your fraternal indulgence Mr. John Applejohn, who is engaged to represent at a very short notice all the statues hitherto made attractive by the grace and strength of Mr. Jawbon, who, for reasons undiscovered, has absented himself at this critical moment from the theatre."

It is only due to the liberal feelings of the artists assembled, to state that they bestowed the heartiest welcome upon John; who was so astonished at the introduction, so overwhelmed by the cordiality of his companions, that he stood staring about him, bereft of speech. At length he was able to exclaim—"I play statues—I never did such a thing in my life! Not for the world! Mr. Shadowly,—there must be a mistake!"

"Mr. Applejohn," said Shadowly, "I have ventured to answer for your consent in this very trifling matter. I well knew the benevolence of your disposition—your readiness to oblige your fellow-creatures—your goodness of heart—in short, all those virtues which I will spare myself the trouble and you the confusion of remembering—and I therefore on my private knowledge of your admirable character, pledged myself for your acquiescence."

"I wish I could be of any use, but I—I"—and again John stammered and stared.

"Unless you comply," said Shadowly, "Mr. Phœnix must forego the advantages of the present very limited season, and close the theatre. I appeal to your humanity, Mr. Applejohn.—Here are ten gentlemen before you, each with a wife and some with two families. Their beds, their dinners for the next month are in your hands."

"But, I don't see how," cried the amazed Applejohn.

"Rival booths, I mean"—and Shadowly hastily corrected himself—"I mean theatres, have a stone Hercules walking outside. Such a person has hitherto been the great attraction of this establishment. Mr. Jawbon, you hear, is not to be found—you are the only man with a figure for Hercules—the only man,"—

"But I can't play," said Applejohn.

"We don't require it: all we desire to save the theatre from destruction is,—that you should dress yourself and promenade outside."

"But if I'm known," cried John, "I 'm ruined for life."

"Wherefore ruined?" asked Shadowly.

"What do you mean by ruin?" exclaimed half-a-dozen voices.

"Are any of these gentlemen ruined?" inquired Shadowly; "stand they not as well with the world as they have ever done?"

"I didn't mean," said Applejohn, and he vainly attempted to apologise—"I assure you, I only meant to say that"—

"That you would prepare yourself this minute. Here is the dress," and Shadowly presented John with an elastic web made to fit the naked figure, muscular developments being assisted by proper padding.

"Anything but that—I couldn't Mr. Shadowly—I"—and John endeavoured to make good his retreat, when Shadowly seized, and then addressed him.

"Mr. Applejohn, I again appeal to your humanity. Still, when you have put on the dress, if you shall continue to feel a diffidence in your natural powers—and you 'll have nothing to do but to walk about, as the mob are not to know that you are not Jawbon himself—if, however, you remain doubtful of your abilities, you may doff the dress and"—

"Well, I 'm sure, I sha'n't like it, but to show you that I,"—and John took off his coat.

"I expected no less, Mr. Applejohn, from your philanthropy," said Shadowly; who with others assisted John to dress, and in a few minutes our hero to his own consternation found himself clothed, wigged, and whitened for a stone Hercules.

"I can't do it—I should die if anybody was to see me—I—where 's my clothes?" and Applejohn looked for his every-day garments. "I should be very happy to oblige you, gentlemen, but I feel that this is—hallo!—what are you about? Gentlemen! I insist! Murder!"—

"Hold your tongue, you fool!" said an actor, one of the four who had suddenly lifted John Applejohn, the new Hercules off his legs, and were now running to deposit him on the platform without.

"If you say a word, we 'll pitch you into the mob," said a second of the bearers, and in a trice John found himself set down among the mummers without. A loud cheer from the surrounding crowd welcomed the wretched Applejohn; who, so much was he alarmed, appalled by his situation, could see nothing distinctly. His sight grew dim—his throat became suddenly dry

—the blood sang in his ears—his tongue was glued to his mouth —his knees knocked together, and he would certainly have fallen on the boards, had not a young lady in a Highlander's costume—one of the gentle actresses,—caught him by the arm, and to rally him into self-possession, insisted on his immediately making one in a three-handed reel, with herself and a grand Turk.

The fair had now began. Showman strove to out-bellow showman, cymbals clashed, drums beat, and all was holyday uproar. As the evening advanced, the crowd became more dense and more vociferous, now taunting John with his awkwardness—now, with his idleness, as like a strayed goose he wandered to and fro, devoutly praying for midnight. He had in vain begged for his clothes to be restored to him, that he might cease to be a statue, and run away. To all these entreaties Mr. Phœnix deigned nothing more consolatory than a very coarse command for John to attend to his business, with subsequent permission when the fair was over to go to the same place, whither in the morning the proprietor had dispatched the dramatist. John wandered inconsolably backwards and forwards, when he was rudely accosted by a tall, robust, clownish, drunken fellow, who had forced his way through the crowd, and had mounted the platform. "Perhaps, you don't know me!" said the stranger, glaring at Applejohn.

"I—I have not that pleasure," said John.

"Well, then, it 's time you did: my name is Jawbon—I 've been in this troop since I played the fairies"—

"What! my dear fellow," and John's heart leapt at the prospect of deliverance—"the Jawbon so celebrated in the statues?"

"Exactly: and now, I 'll let you know—because an artist of my standing gets drunk a little—I 'll let you know what it is for sneaking rascals like you to come and try to take the bread out of his mouth!"

"I take your bread? if you 'll believe me, Mr. Jawbon,"—but John was not allowed to conclude his sentence; for the tipsy Hercules with a power worthy of the arm of his namesake, threw our hapless hero from the platform into the midst of the mob. Fortunately for John, his weight was very equally divided upon the heads of half-a-dozen of his former spectators, who, however, proceeded to resent the freedom by falling upon the innocent offender. A yell from the mob—a rejoicing shout—attended the descent of John from the platform, and a hundred fellows in the crowd rushed to the spot where Hercules had alighted. In the midst of this uproar, several sparkish holyday makers broke through the press, and seized upon the astounded

Applejohn.—"Here 's fun!—glorious fun! lend me a knife—must have his nose—give a hundred for the nose of a living statue—hurrah!—glorious fun!" Such were the cries of five individuals who are not to be considered strangers by the reader, and who were bearing away with triumphant cries the helpless Applejohn, who roared, but as it appeared roared in vain for rescue, when a sailor broke through the mob, laid right and left about him, and seizing the captive Hercules, swore he would murder any number of rascals who should dare to lay a finger on him.

"Well, I'm glad you sung out!—I knew your voice—but lord! that I should find you in such a pickle!" said the sailor.

"Why—it isn't Seabright!—Ned Seabright?" exclaimed Applejohn, and with no further words, he flung his arms about his deliverer, covering him with classic chalk.

"Jack, Jack—how could you so disgrace yourself?—how could—but here tney come!—here comes Sarah and her father!"

At these words, Applejohn breaking from his friend, endeavoured to escape. "No, Jack; we 've had a pretty dance to find you, and now you don't slip your cable, I can tell you. Farmer, give us your coat—here 's a hat—and now, come along to the Compasses."

John in silence, the blushes burning through his whitened face, suffered himself to be wrapt in the farmer's great coat, to have his stone-coloured wig replaced by his friend's hat, and trembling with surprise and shame, he was hurried through the crowd to a neighbouring ale-house.

"I ha' done thee wrong," said Farmer Twopenny, holding forth his hand to the confounded Applejohn, who was never so much a statue—"Ned Seabright ha' cleared it all up—and when you 're in Christian shape again, if you like to ha' Sarah, why"—

The next instant Sarah Twopenny was in the arms of her bewildered Hercules.

The reader, we hope, has not forgotten our introduction of Applejohn, seated on a door step in Chancery-lane.

"Aye, he was seen there, drunk?"

Not so. John Applejohn on the twentieth of June, a burning evening, had been summoned to a certain hospitable roof in Chancery-Lane to bail Edward Seabright, master-mariner, and John's schoolfellow, maliciously arrested for an exorbitant debt. The room of the prison was stifling hot, and John, awaiting certain preliminaries walked to the door, and seated himself upon the step. With his head in his hand he awaited the coming

of a humble functionary dispatched upon some cautionary duty. In this attitude he was seen by an uncharitable acquaintance, and duly reported drunk—for, it was reasonably asked, would any respectable man be found in such a situation if he were sober? John meant well—no man better; but the story of his drunkenness flew from mouth to mouth; his clothier refused him credit—Farmer Twopenny denied him a promised wife—misfortune followed misfortune—and John, still meaning well, at length found himself upon the stage of a mountebank, to be flung thence as a sneaking interloper, an underhand varlet with a mean design upon another's subsistence!

Captain Seabright returned to London, having made a prosperous voyage. He sought for John, and learned the story of his vice from the Farmer, who dwelt with great emphasis on the drunkenness of Applejohn on a particular night when he was seen sitting intoxicated on a step in Chancery-lane. The sailor immediately explained away the calumny; showed how much poor Applejohn had been abused—tracked him from place to place—and at length, with the Farmer and Sarah came to Greenwich Fair, at the very minute Hercules Applejohn, like a mangy cur, was flung among the bellowing crowd.

If the reader admire simple, honest meaning, cheerfully pursued — despite all calumny, despite all suffering — for its simple, honest sake, we think he will rejoice that John Applejohn obtained Sarah Twopenny for wife, and that fortune, tired of persecuting him, rewarded him for troubles past with the three great blessings of this mortal stage—health, competence, and the respect of men.

BARNABY PALMS:

THE MAN WHO "FELT HIS WAY."

CHAPTER I.

At the green age of eighteen, Barnaby Palms possessed the ripe fruit of two score. But the truth is, Barnaby had never been a child. In the nurse's arms he was a very mannikin, showing an extraordinary precocity in his choice of the ripest apple and the biggest cake. Left as a legacy to an only uncle, the boy flourished after his "own sweet will," unchecked and unassisted save by the scantily-paid attentions of a well-meaning pedagogue, vegetating in a hamlet some six miles from the Kentish coast. Poor Joshua! he might have learned of his scholar—might have sucked worldly wisdom even from the suckling. We repeat it: at eighteen Barnaby was a match for grey hairs.

Barnaby had a deep respect for his uncle; in fact, so deep, it all but sank to fear. Thus, our hero spared no pains to feel his way to the heart of his relation, who, be it understood, enjoyed the reputation of a wealthy man, albeit, old inhabitants of the town would sometimes marvel how his wealth had been acquired. Palms, senior, dwelt in a huge dilapidated mansion within gunshot of the sea; his household consisting of an old man and his daughter, a pretty, gay-hearted lass of eighteen.

Old Palms was seated in his oak parlour, steadily employed upon a breakfast, of which beef and Kentish ale, with an incidental drop of brandy, formed the principal part. Before him sat Barnaby in trim travelling attire. He looked and spoke the creature of humility. Could he have made the transfer, he would have given his soul to his uncle as readily as he advanced the mustard. The truth is, Barnaby was about to enter the world: he had drawn on his boots for the great pilgrimage of life. In a few hours, and he must feel his way through the

crowd of London, being destined to the warehouse of Messrs. Nokes and Styles, mercers, City. Hence, the reader may imagine that Barnaby was subdued by the approaching event—that he felt some odd twitchings at the heart, as he stared at the old wainscot, with its every worm-hole familiar to him—that a something rose to his throat, as he looked out upon the sea, tumbling and roaring in concert with a January gale—at that sea which had so often sung his early lullabies,—that his heart, like the ocean-shell, still responded to the sound. It is reasonable to believe—though we cannot substantiate the fact—that some such emotions rose in the bosom of the pilgrim. Of this, however, we are certain: Barnaby looked with the eyes of a devotee towards a small leathern bag, lying on the table at the right hand of his uncle: still Barnaby continued to gaze at the string securing the neck, until, distracted by the appearance of Patience Mills, who—the more serious portion of the breakfast consumed—entered with a dozen eggs.

Now, Patience had a face as round, and cheeks as red, as any pippin, eyes blue as heaven, and a mouth, as a certain young man on the coast avowed, sweet as a honey-comb. Nevertheless, had Patience been some smoke-dried hag, Barnaby had not visited her with grimmer look. Patience replied to the glance by a giggle, solacing herself, when out of hearing, by muttering "glad he 's going." Barnaby looked at his uncle's fingers, and then at the bag. Heedless of the hint, old Palms took an egg.

"Come, eat, Barney; eat. Ye 'll have a cold ride to London: the north wind's edged like a scythe. What! not take eggs?"

"Doat on 'em, uncle," cried Barnaby, aroused, like Shylock, from "a dream of money-bags." The fact is, Barnaby had that day determined to like everything: on that occasion he wished to leave a vivid impression of his meekness and humility. "Quite a weazel at eggs, uncle," continued Barnaby, and he began to chip the shell. Now, it so happened that Barnaby had fallen upon an egg which, on being opened, emitted conclusive evidence of its antiquity. Old Palms, instantly perceiving the work of time, roared to Barnaby to cast the abomination out of the window. Barnaby, however, determined to give an example of his economy—of his indifference to petty annoyance—sat like a statue, still holding the egg between his thumb and finger—his uncle applying the same instruments to his own nose.

"Out with it, Barney!" Barney smiled a remonstrance, and handled his spoon. "Zounds!" cried old Palms, almost grinning through his disgust at what he deemed the ignorance or simplicity of his nephew—"Zounds! nephew—why—ha! ha!—you 'll never eat it?"

Barnaby, mistaking the humour of his uncle, nodded knowingly.

"You will? I tell you 'tis a musty egg—a bad egg—pah! the egg"—

Barney looked as though he believed he had won his uncle's heart for ever, and then complacently made answer, "I don't care for eggs over fresh."

Now, we boldly declare the egg of Barnaby to be a grander subject for the moralist and the romance-writer than either the egg of Columbus, the famous roc's egg of the Eastern Princess, the golden egg of Æsop, or the egg of Mother Goose. Reader, pause a moment, and reflect on the prosperity of whole hordes of people, whose success in life is solely attributable to their participating in the taste of Barnaby.

Look at his lordship, sparkling with honours, padded with bank paper, and know ye to what he owes all this? Oh, doubtless to his high statesmanlike qualities—his profound knowledge—his indefatigable industry. Not so, not so; the simple story is, he was wont to confidentially breakfast with the minister, and on such occasions showed that he cared not for his eggs over fresh. But shall we stay at courts and courtiers? No: from a palace to a workshop there is ever some ductile eater—some omnivorous, obsequious Barney at breakfast—who has made, or looks to make, a figure in the world by not caring for his eggs over fresh. Many are the ways in which the tale may be told. There is Tom Spangle, a handsome, healthy, six-foot animal of two-and-thirty. He had not a shilling; now, he rides blood, and writes cheques. Do you know the secret of the change? Very well; he married the ancient, yellow widow of an army-contractor. Ay, even so; he cared not for his egg over fresh.

The avowed taste of Barnaby was not lost upon his uncle. The old man looked through the youth with a thinking eye—an eye that seemed to read his moral anatomy—and then uttered a long "hem!" at the same time stretching his hand to the money-bag. Invisible fingers were playing on the heart-strings of Barnaby, whilst, from the corner of his eye, he saw his uncle slowly undo the strip of knotted leather which "compressed the god within." The bag was opened; its glorious contents blazed on the table; and as they rang upon the oak, Barnaby instinctively rose to his feet, standing respectfully uncovered in "the presence."

"Barney," said old Palms, and reverently laid his hand upon the gold, "Barney, my child, you see the little hoard I've set apart for you?" The life-blood of Barnaby tingled in his very eyes, and his ears rang with music. "You see the few savings

and scrapings I have made for the child of my brother? For I feared that you, an innocent, unprotected, unassisted lad, would need the aid which money can alone afford. Barney, I trembled for the softness of your heart—the simplicity of your nature." Here Barney felt almost in peril of tears. "Yes, Barney, these were my weak anxieties, my foolish fears." Saying which, the old man began to return the guineas to the bag. During the operation, not a word was spoken. Barney, scarcely venturing to breathe, stood with his head bent on his breast, and one eye on the table, silent and subdued. The tinkling of the gold—the voice of Barney's fortune, was alone audible; and, as note followed note, the young expectant became possessed as though he listened to angelic trumpets. The bag being filled, Palms proceeded to tie its mouth, talking as he leisurely tied. "Barney, I find my fears were the fears of ignorance. You need not such a sum as this; you are already rich in strength—in wisdom."

"I, uncle?" cried Barnaby, sensitively shrinking from the compliment, and at the same time—struck by the manner of Palms—breaking into a profuse sweat. "*I* strong? *I* wise? Oh, uncle!"

"Come, Barney, why so modest? I say, strength and wisdom, as the world goes, are yours. Here we've a hundred guineas in this little bag; what then? To a lad of your wit they're of little worth. You'll never miss 'em. Now, here," and Palms slid the coin along the table, "here are five guineas."

"Five! uncle!"

"Five. The reward of your skill—of the skill you have shown this morning."

"Five guineas? skill? uncle!"

"Never doubt it, Barney; take up the money, and never mistrust that head of thine; for well I know, that the fellow who, in this working world, cares not for his eggs '*over fresh*,' will, in the end, flourish as well though he begin with five guineas, as with five thousand."

The tone and manner of old Palms forbade any reply on the part of his nephew, who, nevertheless, received the eulogy with a profound sulkiness. Indeed, had Barnaby pocketed five snowballs, he could not have looked more blank and frozen; could not have mounted the borrowed horse, ready saddled to convey him to London, with more reluctant leg, with grimmer countenance. No wonder; Barnaby thought he had securely felt his way: now Barnaby had lost ninety-five guineas.

CHAPTER II.

THERE is a golden volume yet to be written on the first struggles of forlorn genius in London—magnificent, miserable, ennobling, degrading London. If all who have suffered would confess their sufferings—would show themselves in the stark, shivering squalor in which they first walked her streets—would paint the wounds which first bled in her garrets—what a book might be placed in the hands of pride!—what stern, wholesome rebukes for the selfish sons of fortune!—what sustaining sweetness for the faint of spirit! It is true, the letters might be of blood—the tales of agony and horror—of noble natures looking serenely, with the hungry fox gnawing their bowels—of disappointment sinking to despair—of misery, dreaming of, and wooing death! And then, how many petty shifts to mask a haggard face with smiles—how many self-denials—how many artifices to hide a nakedness from laughing scorn! Nor would the tone be all of wretchedness. No! beautiful emanations of the human heart—the kindest ministerings of human affections would sweeten and exalt many a sad history. How often should we find the lowly comforting the high—the ignorant giving lessons to the accomplished—the poor of earth aiding and sustaining the richly-dowered!

Barnaby was in London; but not—not to add to the number of splendid vagabonds, now thrust from her thresholds to sleep in the market-place, and now, dining off plate cheek by jowl with my lord. Barney was speedily warm, as in wool, in the house of Messrs. Nokes and Styles; and with the combined wisdom and delicacy of a spider, began to feel his way to the foibles of his employers. Nokes was a man of brass—Styles a thing of willow. Assured of this, Barnaby immediately felt the propriety of bowing to the one, and bending the other.

"Look at that lazy brute,—he doesn't draw a single pound," remarked the observing Nokes, as one evening, standing at his warehouse door, he contemplated the progress of a passing wagon.

"Not half-a-pound, sir," chimed in Barnaby; "and yet, I doubt not, he eats his share of corn and hay. But this it is to be, as one may say, in partnership with those who *will* pull."

"Right, Barnaby;" and the countenance of Nokes darkened, as he watched the easy-going quadruped.

"They who *will* work, *may* work. Was Mr. Styles here to-day?"

It is our hope that the query of Barnaby was unconsciously coupled with his profound views of the distribution of labour—that he had innocently let fall a spark on the train of Nokes's smothered feelings. If, on the contrary, the conflagration was premeditated, the moral incendiary must have glowed at the flattering proof of his success; for Nokes was all but suffocated. The blood rushed to his face—retreated—rushed—went back—presenting unto Barney as fine an exhibition of "humours and spirits" as that recorded by the learned Peireskius, who at the cost of some words, sets forth the useful lesson he acquired through "an augmenting-glass, or microscope,"—showing how a certain vilest animal "setting himself to wrestle with a flea, was so incensed that his blood ran down from head to foot, and from foot to head again!" Wise Peireskius! true philosopher! who from the bickerings of small despised animals extracts better wisdom, learns surer self-government, than the unthinking million carry from a dog-fight, yea, from a bull-bait! (Reader, when thou shalt behold a Nokes bursting with envy, hatred, and uncharitableness, think of the learned lord of Peiresk and his little monitor: ponder, and let thy soul be instructed.)

"Lack-a-day! I'd quite forgot; 'tis Epsom races," cried Barnaby, in self-reproval of his unnecessary question, the face of Nokes again suddenly resembling a chemist's bottle by candle-light. "Epsom races!" repeated the speaker, in a tone that left nothing further to be advanced upon the subject. And Nokes evidently judged the words to be conclusive; for feeling—like modesty at a public dinner—more than he could express, with a wisdom rarely exhibited on such occasions, he spoke not at all. He merely jerked out his watch; and, at a glance, calculated that in two hours at most he should be wanted to join his friends at whist.

Mr. Styles, in addition to his love of horseflesh, had a passion for the rural and picturesque. He kept a country-house, under whose hospitable roof Barney was wont at times to eat a sabbath meal, having previously attended his inviter to the parish church. It was a sight to melt the thoughtless youth of Bridewell to behold Barney during service. There he was pinned to the side of his employer; now seeking out the lessons of the day—now, with open mouth and staring eyeballs (an expression of features not disgraceful to any tombstone), outsinging a numerous Sunday-school, shrilly piping in the gallery. It is true, the clerk would cast a look of bitterness; but then, it was avowed that Barnaby

never opened his mouth, that the poor man did not feel shaken on his throne.

"A most comfortable sermon, Barney?" remarked Styles, with a certain air of interrogation. "Most comfortable?"

"I'm a wicked creature, if I wouldn't have given a guinea for Mr. Nokes to hear it. Did you observe, sir, how that gentleman with the scarlet face and powdered head was moved? Pray, sir, who is he?"

"Humph! He's newly retired among us, Barney; I—I forget his name: but they tell me he has in his time been a great player."

"No doubt, sir; no doubt. Every word of the preacher seemed to enter him like a bodkin! A great player! poor wretch! Surely, sir, he can't have made all his money by playing?"

"Every penny, Barney."

"He keeps a coach!" cried Barney, in a modulated tone of polite amazement.

"A house," added Styles, "that did belong to the member of the county—a town mansion—and a shooting-box."

"All won by playing? Mercy upon us! The devil offers great temptations!" moralized Barney.

"Say what we will of him, Barney," responded Styles, with exemplary liberality towards a fallen foe; "say what we will of him, I am afraid the devil is no fool."

"And—and"—asked Barney, with a face somewhat uncorded from its first rigidity—"what may the gentleman have most played?"

"I can't exactly tell, but I believe principally low parts; such as footmen, clowns, and country-boys!"

"Parts! I mean games? Chicken-hazard—short-whist—roulette—rouge-et-noir—or"—and Barney for some seconds continued the inventory, with a knowledge of the subject wholly unexpected.

"Games! Understand me, Barney; I tell you the man was an actor, a stage-player."

Barney could not subdue a look of disappointment: in a moment, however, he returned to the subject. "Actor or not, I am sure he must have played. La, sir, did you see him when the doctor thundered at gaming?" Truth to say, Styles was one of those profound sleepers who can sometimes snore at Jove's best bolts—"Ha! as I said, I'd sell a guinea cheap, so that Mr. Nokes had heard it."

Styles looked meaningly at Barney—drank off a glass of port—clasped his fingers—glanced a moment at his left shoe—and then, as a magpie turns his head, lifted his cheek inquiringly

towards Nokes's well-wisher. "Gaming, sir! isn't it a sort of murder?" Styles nodded: "Wives and babes are killed by it. Isn't it a kind of arson—such capital houses are destroyed by it?" Styles nodded twice. "Isn't it the worst of robberies,—for the most innocent, most painstaking, most upright of partners may be made beggars by it?" Styles responded to the last query by a long succession of nods. "Then, sir, and saving your presence, I must say again,—I must say"—and here Barney emptied his glass, as seeking courage for the avowal—"I would have given five guineas had Mr. Nokes been with us at church this day."

"What do you mean, Barney?" asked Styles, with the look and tone with which folks usually address a ghost. "What do you mean?"

"Why, sir, this I mean"—and Barney drew his chair in confidential proximity to his master—"this I mean; I must say it—I can't help it—but, sir, I don't like whist clubs." And an emphatic blow upon the table made the glasses leap at the aversion of the speaker.

"No more do I," replied Styles; and in the reply proved himself the master of a most difficult science—the art of saying very much in very little. Now, whether the wine was more than usually subtle, or whether the devotion of Barney had suddenly softened his employer,—certain it is, that Styles rapidly became an altered man. He who was usually silent and timid, became loud and self-asserting; inveighing, in good round terms against the arrogance and imprudence of Nokes, and upbraiding himself for his pusillanimous deference to his dissipated partner.

"I have been a fool long enough, Barney," insinuated the modest Styles; an assertion which his no less diffident hearer ventured not to deny. "Yes, yes; I have too long given the reins out of my own hands; have been a nobody in the firm." Barney shrugged his shoulders, and leered acquiescence. "A nobody!—worse than nobody!—a blockhead—a nincompoop—an ass!" Barney, with great moral courage, bowed to the justice of every epithet. "But," exclaimed Styles for the twentieth time, rising at the accomplished number, "I'll be so no longer—I'll"—

We have not the slightest doubt that a most beautiful peroration was, at this moment, destroyed—barked down, by a yelping little spaniel, unhappily for oratory, lying with extended fore-paws beneath the chair of Styles; the whole weight of the speaker coming suddenly upon the left leg of Kitty, she howled and barked with a persevering vigour truly feminine; her agony and helplessness were not lost upon a sister: for Madge, a terrier

bitch, sprang from an opposite corner, and, in an instant, almost joined her teeth in the neck of the wounded. Kitty howled in a more intense treble; Madge growled vengeance in deep bass; whilst Styles and Barney, having vainly tried to separate the disputants, for a moment stood and looked in each other's face, —the concert of female voices still continuing. "Did you ever see such a tyrannical fury?" asked Styles, with a hopeless look, pointing at the ravenous Madge.—The appeal was too much for the sensibility of Barney, who—the exclamation struck from him by a yet higher shriek on the part of Kitty—roared out—"D—— that Nokes!" aiming an ineffectual blow at the newly-christened. Styles smiled benevolently at the oath. Barney, moved by the sufferings of Kitty, and a blow upon his own shin against the chair, dragged forth the combatants; Styles tugged at the spaniel, whilst Barney, with the wisdom of the cock-pit, placed the tail of the terrier between his teeth. At this picturesque moment, and most unluckily for Madge, the servant bawled in at the door—

"Mr. Nokes!"

Down, with terrible force, came the grinders of Barney, the terrier quitted its hold, and, tearing out of the room, ran yelling close by Nokes, sometime her unsuspecting namesake.

"There—there—Barney!" cried Styles, and confusedly opened the door of a closet, within which, silently as a spectre, Barney felt his way. Styles, with the suffering spaniel under his arm, seated himself in his chair; the bitch, with female delicacy, squeaking little, but shaking her crushed fore-paw reproachfully in the face of the destroyer. Nokes entered; his countenance was lined and mysterious as lawyer-written parchment; there was mischief in it, though obscured by certain confusion; much malice and no little cowardice. He coughed, but, strange enough, no subject seemed to present itself. Luckily, he glanced at the streaming eyes and quivering paw of Kitty. "So—humph!—a dog-fight?"

"It 's very odd," replied Styles, with the learned air of an F.R.S., "it 's very odd—but though Kitty and Madge have been together these five years, they can't agree. It 's very odd."

"When people can't agree," returned Nokes, and he looked a Columbus as he propounded the moral discovery, "they had better part. Mr. Styles, for these three months I have been confirmed in this opinion."

"Longer—surely, longer. 'T is two years since Mrs. Nokes had a separate maintenance."

Nokes, touched by the indelicate allusion to his domestic infelicity, in silence passed his five fingers across his brow, and

said, with very cold dignity, "Mr. Styles, fortunately there are partnerships which may be dissolved."

"Fortunately," acquiesced Styles, stroking the head of Kitty.

"You wonder, Mr. Styles, why your dogs can't agree? Perhaps I can explain; it may be, that one is sporting out of doors all day, whilst the other is left at home to bark and keep house."

"What do you mean, Mr. Nokes?" asked Styles; and with forced tranquillity, he placed the bitch upon the hearth-rug. Had an oracle put an interrogative, it could not have been more searching—more impressive.

"I mean, sir, that I have a partner in view, whose habits of business, Mr. Styles"—

"Glad to hear it," interrupted Styles, "for as I have some time contemplated a dissolution, we can the sooner get rid of one another."

"No house can stand against the chance of such bets," cried Nokes. "Hundreds vanishing after hundreds."

"Bets! hundreds! No, Mr. Nokes, let us keep to the serious truth; guinea points, sir,—guinea points don't become a tradesman."

"Guinea points!—guinea—but, as we are happily of the same mind to separate, we won't talk nonsense."

"'Tisn't necessary," accorded Styles; "therefore, as we understand each other, may I not ask the name of your new partner?"

"Oh, certainly; a most industrious, pains-taking young man."

"Glad to hear it," said Styles, again. "I think—indeed, I am sure, I have for myself just such a partner in my eye."

"I wish you all success," cried Nokes; "may I know who he is?"

"To be sure; a most business-like, prudent person. But, first, the name of your partner?"

"He doesn't yet know his good luck. But"—and Nokes hesitated—"Can't you guess?"

"Hav'n't a notion. Yes—I think—I—"

"To be sure," cried Nokes,—"Barnaby; though I hav'n't told him,—Barnaby."

Styles hardly repressed a smile at the credulity of Nokes; then, with a serious air, observed, "My good friend, don't count upon him. Allowing that I myself—though he is quite ignorant of the fact—were not determined upon offering him a partner's share, I am sure he would not—and, forgive me, my friend—he could not join with you."

"Not!" exclaimed Nokes, and his eyes glittered like brass buttons—"And why not?"

"The lad is scrupulous ; he can't abide cards," said Styles.

"You mean bets squandered upon fillies," replied Nokes, sarcastically.

"Pshaw! between ourselves, the young man has talked to me with tears in his eyes about your nightly whist ; guinea points, Nokes—guinea points!"

Nokes leapt to his feet—and extending his arms—projecting his breast—and throwing back his head, cried aloud to the vacant ceiling, "Twopenny! As I have a soul to be saved—twopenny!"

Styles, subdued by the fervour of his partner, in a modulated tone proceeded, "I do assure you, Barnaby has always sworn to a guinea."

"A household crocodile!" cried Nokes. "Ah, friend Styles, had you lost as little by the last favourite,"—

"As little? How much, now—how much?" asked Styles, with a bridling air.

"Wasn't it five hundred?"

"A hat—a single hat to Jerry White—he wore it this very day at church—five hundred! Upon my conscience, and may I die a sinner, but 'twas a hat."

"Barnaby protested 'twas five hundred pounds."

"The hypocrite! he shall this moment speak to our faces."

"I wish he could ; but though he told me you had asked him here to-day, he vowed he couldn't spend the sabbath with a blackleg and a horse-racer."

"A blackleg!" screamed Styles, and the exclamation was answered by a shriek in a yet higher note from the cupboard. Nokes at once recognised the voice of Barney, and ran to open the door, when Styles, preventing him, turned the key, put it in his pocket, and hurried his partner into an adjoining room, Barney still raving—as his masters conceived—to be heard in explanation. After a lapse of some ten minutes, employed by Nokes and Styles in mutual assurances of renewed faith and friendship, the key of the cupboard, with a cheque for ten pounds, was placed in the hands of Betty, armed with final orders touching the prisoner. The door was speedily unlocked ; and Barney, his hands crimsoned as the Thane of Cawdor's, blood on his face, and horror in his voice, rushed out, sank in a chair, and in a tone of mingled fear and veneration, exclaimed—"The devil!" A common household occurrence will explain away the seeming mystery. The blessing of increase was upon all things owned by Styles ; even his cats escaped not the general good. It so happened that seven kittens, scarce one day old, with their satisfied mother, were the unknown tenants of the cupboard, previous to

the occupancy of Barney,—who, agitated by the colloquy of the partners, and having no thought, taking no pity, of the blind, had walked upon the embryo hopes of future Whittingtons. Two of the kittens being killed, the maternal instincts of the parent were aroused; and when Nokes and Styles left their assistant, as they believed, yelling with compunction, he was suffering in various parts of his body, from the teeth and claws of a revengeful cat. It was with some difficulty that Betty explained to the confused young gentleman the final decree of his late employers. They had sent him his salary for the current quarter, and Betty would lose no time in opening the door; a hope was expressed, that he would not show himself at the warehouse. Barney took his hat, and crawled from the house. The night was pitch black, and the rain beginning to fall,—he was soaked to the skin ere he had felt his way to his comfortless London bed.

CHAPTER III.

"Sir, you talk of coincidences,"—thus one day spake a valiant captain of the local militia—"I will tell you, sir, a most remarkable coincidence: it is this, sir:—the very day on which Napoleon escaped from Elba, I marched with my regiment to Wormwood Scrubs!" We are about to match the coincidence of the gallant warrior for Middlesex.—Thus, be it known, that the very night on which Barnaby Palms was turned from the firm of Nokes and Styles, the soul of Peter Blond, mercer and hosier, Bishopgate-Without, was summoned to his last account. From a subsequent calculation made by the widow, it was evident that Peter had vacated his house of clay the very instant Barnaby left the roof of Styles: yes, as Betty turned the key, Peter expired. Who, when they have heard our tale, shall say that Fortune doth not sometimes look above her bandage, to take a peep at vagrant merit? Who shall call her a mere romping hoyden, playing at blindman's buff, catching the ill-favoured and the worthless, and hugging them in her arms, whilst the fair and virtuous stand untouched in obscure corners? Or, granted, that the goddess doth sometimes approach them, shall it be said, that it is only to show them her beautiful hands, and then to pass on? The truth is, we slander Fortune: because the wise and bountiful creature will not let us at all times and in all places have our wicked will of her, like

unprincipled rakes, we take a poor revenge by calling her naughty names. We are rejoiced to say it, Barnaby was not of these evil speakers. However, to proceed with his obligations to what the unthinking vulgar would call good luck.

The second day after his dismissal, Barnaby, his clear spirit obscured by thoughts of future dinners, walked — we should rather say, was led by his good genius—up Bishopgate-Without. Melancholy grew upon him as he went: balked in his best intentions by the ignorance and hasty prejudice of his employers—disappointed in his hopes of partnership — it might be, misrepresented to his fellow-creatures—the whole earth grew dim and blank. At that moment, so great was his disgust of the worldly wealth which he could not obtain, that in all his previous life, he never felt so serious—so religious. Whilst in this dark solemn mood, an undertaker's porter walked with the elastic step of death before him, and presented to Barney's meditating eyes a coffin of satisfactory respectability. Here was an accident—or, as our friend the captain would have said, a coincidence! For as the eye of Barney fell upon the coffin-plate, his face brightened —nay, became radiant as the visage of a saint in a cathedral window. Doubtless, urges the reader, Barney felt a spiritual ecstasy—a "rapt," as the mother Maria Teresa calls it? We do not speculate—we speak to facts. Barney, having devoured the inscription, brightened up, smote his right leg with much vehemence, and with huge strides walked onwards. The brief notice —that last short history of the noisiest of us—"*Peter Blond, aged* 64," told Barney that Mrs. Blond was left a solitary widow, without a child, but with a capital connexion.

Shame upon ye, Barney! And out upon the vile and sordid matters blighting this beautiful, this liberal world,—that self-promotion should ever be sought on the coffin-plates of our neighbours! In few words—the deceased interred—Barney became the widow Blond's first man of business.

For three years did Barney, with exemplary skill, direct the affairs of the late Peter Blond. For three years did he proceed, cautiously feeling his way, as he believed, to the respect of the trade, and as he hoped, to the affections of his mistress; who, be it known, had some five-and-twenty years the advantage of her deceased lord, being all such years his junior. The house flourished—the widow had long since cast away an unbecoming mourning—Barney grew sleek as a beaver—and all things promised—no, there was one doubt, one fear would haunt our hero. With a curious superstition, Barney felt all about him insecure, until the church had laid its hands upon it. Besides—and why are we thus tardy in our justice?—Barney had his

principles. As he became prosperous, he felt a growing respect for character; nor was it altogether self that rendered him thus sensitive; he had the feelings of a man, and saw the situation of the widow. Let the following dialogue be his testimony.

"As for the world, Mrs. Blond, depend upon it, the world grows wickeder and wickeder." So saying, Barney moved closer to the widow, whose good-natured face seemed little shadowed by the misanthropy of her managing man. The place was the back-parlour—the time the hour of supper. The meal despatched, moral reflections—of which the above is not an unfavourable sample—flowed like a stream from the lips of Barney, evidently deeply feeling the worthlessness of all living flesh. It 's enough, ma'am, to make a young man go into a wood, and turn hermit."

"What 's the matter, Mr. Palms?" asked the still unanswered widow, for the sixth time.

"'Tis a hard thing to say; but I really do believe that all mankind are villains." (Whenever a gentleman says thus much, be assured, considerate reader, that he contemplates an instant offer of himself as a choice exception.)

"What—all! Mr. Palms?"

"Nearly all, ma'am," responded Barney, showing his teeth. "Human creatures! Snakes upon two legs, Mrs. Blond."

"Why—what—what has happened!" asked the widow, her face looking all the prettier for the earnestness of its expression.

"I am sure, ma'am, if this house had been roofed with silver, and floored with gold, I could not have been more contented with it. Since the death of your husband, no one has been so happy as I."

"Mr. Palms!"

"I—I won't say no one, ma'am; but it 's hard to leave when one might be so very, very comfortable."

"Oh! I perceive, Mr. Palms," tranquilly remarked the widow —"you have in view a better situation?"

"Better!" echoed Barney, in a hopeless tone, at the same time venturing a leer of soft reproach—"better!"

"Then what compels you to leave me?"

"You do," and Barney was almost suffocated with tenderness.

"I! Mr. Palms?"

"For myself, ma'am, I care little what the world says. I—I hope I am an old file that defies the tooth of slanderous serpents. But, ma'am, I can't feel myself a man, and stand by to hear you wronged. What is gold to a good name!"

"Pray, explain, Mr. Palms. In a word, sir, what"—

"The neighbours, ma'am—the neighbours," replied Barney, in deep expressive notes.

"And what of the neighbours?" briskly interrogated Mrs. Blond.

Barney, with exquisite delicacy, evading a reply, proceeded —"I have made up all the books; the accounts are balanced to a farthing. Since your affairs have been in my hands, Mrs. Blond, I hope I may say they have not suffered."

"There never was a better book-keeper, Mr. Palms. But, sir, you spoke of the neighbours—what do they say—what dare they say?"

"Well, ma'am," and Barney did a violence to his feelings as he spoke, "the woman to the right tells everybody—the Lord forgive her!—that we—that is, you and I ma'am, are truly and lawfully married!"

"Married!" cried Mrs. Blond, in a voice that spoke a full knowledge of the awful responsibility.—"Married!"

"That 's not the worst."—Mrs. Blond looked doubtingly.—"That 's not the worst: for the woman to the left, with all her teeth and nails, denies it. She says,"—

Little Mrs. Blond breathed hard with suppressed disgust at the malevolence of the world. "And what does she say?"

"She swears we certainly are not married; but swears as strongly, that—that—we—ought—to be." Mrs. Blond sat silent and flushing. Barney, with profitable insensibility, mistaking the blushes of offended beauty for the tumultuous confusion of a surprised heart, dropped upon his knees, and seized the hand of the widow. At that instant—and as though by conspiracy—out went the candle!—at the same point of time, to complete the confusion of the widow, Bobby, the boy, coming to the door, bawled through the darkness—"Is Mr. Palms gone home, ma'am?—may I lock up?" Barney scrambled to his feet—and the widow unconsciously called for a light. A light was instantly supplied by the staring boy, who was directed by his mistress to attend Barney to the door. Palms followed Bobby a few paces, then stopping short, returned to the widow. "As I said, dear Mrs. Blond—as I said, ma'am, what is gold to a good name?" Mrs. Blond said nothing. Barney, taking silence for his best friend, in plain direct terms urged his suit. It was apparent that late incidents had had their due effect on the prudence of the widow: for, at his vigorous solicitation, she promised to meet Barney at the church. That the ceremony might attract no attention on the part of gossipping neighbours, Mrs. Blond stipulated that it should take place at a certain little village on the Sussex coast. All this negotiation was the fruit of scarcely

five minutes, Bobby standing with his finger on the street-door latch. Barney walked "like man new made" to the spot where the boy, with a candle twixt his fingers, in fine *chiar' oscuro* awaited him. Now Barney, looking down upon the urchin, saw his eyes twinkling with meaning, and his mouth drawn up like a rabbit's into a smothered titter. On this, anticipating somewhat his dominorial rights, Barney boxed the boy's ears, calling him "a —— sneering little scoundrel." He then strided into the street, and like a lover, gazed on the moonlight. The clear beam fell upon the house, and as Barney gazed at the golden letters "*Blond*," he might be dreaming, but he saw them fade and disappear, and in their place beam forth, in lambent brightness—"*Palms*."

"But a few days, and Barney was wandering—musing on wedding-rings—on the Sussex shore. It had been arranged by the widow and himself, that they should separately leave town, and meet at the church door on the appointed morning. Barney had engaged the best apartments at the best inn, and in eight-and-forty hours he might call the widow, with all her funded wealth, her stock, and outstanding debts, his own. His feelings seriously directed by the coming event, he attended the parish church with the best intentions. But where shall weak man hide where temptation is not? Placed immediately opposite to the destroying eyes of woman, do not our resolutions, though built of granite, melt like wax? Thus it was with Barney; he was stared into weakness, falsehood—but let us not pursue the theme: a syren voice whispered in his ear—"to-night—at eleven—the churchyard,"—and then the blooming tempter vanished.

If there be a dreary, "aching void," in the time of man, it is the four-and twenty hours preceding marriage. Now, Barney, though brimful of love, was in a strange town, with nothing to do but to count the minutes. Thus, if at eleven o'clock he walked to the church-yard, it was not to lose his constancy, but his time. As for bed, could he sleep on the eve of the glad to-morrow? To the churchyard then he sauntered. The night was dark—the wind cold—he listened for the "voice of the charmer," and heard the owl hoot from the belfry. Thinking he was tricked, he felt a touch of compunction for the widow: blushing for his weakness, he turned to seek his inn, when he felt his hand grasped, and a low, soft "hush" fell upon his ear. Ere he could reply to the admonition, his legs were off the ground—a bandage over his eyes and mouth—and his arms pinioned. Could Barney have been an impartial judge, he himself would have eulogised the celerity of the operation. In a thought, he felt himself

rocking in a cradle: the plashing of oars convinced him of his error: he was on "the wide and open sea."

To be sold for a slave was the least Barney looked for; perhaps to become the property of the Grand Turk—to be promoted—promoted!—to a keeper of the seraglio! Barney thought of the widow, and grew cold from head to sole. Barney was blindfolded; yet did he plainly see a gang of buccaniers with moustachios long as ordinary pig-tails. The boat was speedily alongside a very suspicious craft. Barney was happily spared the sight of her.—The captive was lifted aboard, and unceremoniously, as a bale of coarse merchandise, flung into a corner called a berth. This act seemed to be a preconcerted signal with wind and wave; for almost on the instant a stiff gale sprang from the north-west—the sea rose in mountains, and the vessel, light as a cork, danced upon their tops. In this uproar, what was to be expected of the stomach of Barney, anything but amphibious? It was evident that his keepers had formed a right opinion of its weakness, for with a latent feeling of humanity—let us praise where praise is due—they had taken the bandage from Barney's mouth.

The storm roared itself, like a wilful child, to rest, and the morning dawned upon the wave, bright and gorgeous. It was the wedding morning of Barnaby Palms—and, lying coiled like a distempered dog in his nook, he told the hours struck from the church, where, in brief time, a disappointed bride would weep for him. Barnaby sighed; the time wore on—he groaned: another hour, he called aloud; another and another, and he raved and stormed, and begged to be put ashore. Coarse and violent as his persecutors had shown themselves, they still were men; and knowing that the situation of Barney was—as the newspapers, when the fact was known, would propound—more easily felt than described,—they opened the door of his prison, and suffered him to feel his way upon deck. Barney saw no slave-ship—but the "Jemima," smuggling cutter of Hythe.

"Shore! shore!" exclaimed Barney, and he looked with devouring eyes towards the beach.

"Ay, ay, sir," was the dogged reply of an old tarpauling, "all in good time, your honour."

"Mayhap the gentleman never see'd Flushing," conjectured a second. "If so, we'll give him passage free."

"My good fellows," cried Barney, whose extreme agitation rendered him insensible to the cold irony of his captors, "my good fellows, I forgive the joke—I—ha! ha!—'t was a capital hoax—but don't push it too far. I must go ashore."

One of the crew approached him, and with a confidential air, asked—"Can you swim?"

"No—no—no!" cried Barney, scarcely repressing his tears.

"What a pity!—for we can't spare you a boat. Up with the anchor, lads."

"Gentlemen—I tell you I am looked for—I am expected—I—I am going to be married!"

"Oh!" cried three or four, as though at once won by the necessities of Barney, "he's going to be married lads—let's give him a wedding-suit."

Ere Barney could inquire into the liberal proposition, a bucket of tar was placed at his feet. "Now, sir," asked one of the sailors, with forced politeness, at the same time poising in his hand a brush dropping the unsavoury liquid—"now, sir, which will you have on first, your waistcoat or your breeches?" Barney opened his mouth, no doubt to proclaim his preference, when the brush, maliciously directed, stopt the communication. Then straightway, Barney grinning horribly the while, was bedaubed from head to heels. The clock struck as the operation was finished.

"Ugh! oh! murder! let me go ashore—let me fly"—gasped the now water-proof Barney.

"Jack, the gentleman wants to fly; where's his wings?"

With a noble sacrifice to the desires of the visitor, the only feather-bed aboard was brought upon deck, instantly unripped, and its contents carefully distributed about the person of Barney. As he picked the feathers from his eyes and mouth, and blew out his big cheeks, he looked a monstrous mixture of the ape and penguin. "There—I declare," exclaimed one of his valets, "talk of a wedding!—why you're drest for Neptune's daughter." The boat was then brought alongside. Barnaby very gladly took a seat in it, and four of the crew prepared to pull him ashore. "I wonder," said one of the men, "what's become of that fellow—Barnaby Palms I think they called him—who, when he was turned from the firm of Nokes and Styles, informed about that little matter of French lace? I wonder what's become of him!" Here Barnaby might have been communicative; he said nothing but shook his feathers. Having reached the shore, the men insisted upon carrying Barney into the churchyard—to the very spot where he was to have met the false fair, from certain after circumstances shrewdly suspected to be the lawful wife or one of the smugglers.

In a thought the conspirators had vanished, and Barney was alone among the tombs. Hearing the sound of voices, and confused by the ludicrous spectacle he presented, he ran blindly

forward, was tripped up by some osiers, and rolled headlong into a grave, dug, as it would seem, on purpose, that very morning. As he lay stunned and confounded, the bells rang out a merry peal, striking into Barney a sense of his situation. He rose upon his feet, and with his hands grasping the edge of the grave he lifted his head half way above the surface, and saw—proceeding from the church—a blushing, new-made bride, in the person of the late Mrs. Blond, and in her happy husband, the silkman from the opposite shop. Mrs. Blond had long reflected on his secret offers, but the wisdom of Barney—his fine delicate sense of feeling his way—had fixed her for ever. The silkman walked on, a bridegroom: Barney stood where he was, a bachelor. His rival was bound for life: Barney was only tarred and feathered!

CHAPTER IV.

In the foregoing chapters we have confined ourselves to two great disappointments of our hero, who, however, as he felt his way through life, had manifold small successes. It is true that fortune, when she promised most, had shown herself most fickle; yet had she rewarded Barney with a thousand gifts. Thus, ere he had completed his three-and-fortieth year, Barney had "land and beeves." His miraculous sense of touch, like that of Midas, had turned some of the dirtiest matters into gold. It is confessed, he had groped in dark corners for his wealth—but then, how much higher his merit—how much greater the discovery? It is only the vulgar mind that thinks to win its fortune along the broad highway of life, in clearest day; the nobler genius, hugging itself in its supremacy, searches pits and holes, with this sustaining creed—that though the prize acquired be not really of half the worth to that picked up in open light, it has to the finder a double value, because obtained in secrecy and gloom.

"A broken heart, Mr. Palms! you don't believe in any such nonsense?"

In truth, Barney was not so weak; since he felt himself a reasoning creature he had ever doubted that much talked of phenomenon: moreover, a recent visit to the museum of Surgeon's Hall had confirmed him in his belief; he had seen, to the best of his memory, no such preparation. Hence, he had used the words "a broken heart," as, we trust, a pardonable figure of speech.

"To be sure not, Mr. Fitch; to be sure not. All I meant to say was, that if Louisa"—

"You are a steady, sober man, Mr. Palms—what is more, you have an excellent business—Louisa wants a husband—you want a wife—I consent to the match—you don't object to it—then what more need be said about the matter?"

The speaker who was thus smoothing Barney's walk to the church, was, in the course of events, soon destined to go thither himself; certain it is, he looked affianced to the undertaker. "A broken heart! ha! ha!" and the old, white-haired gentleman crowed like a cock at the extravagance.

Barney smiled an instant approval of the old man's merriment, and then, looking becomingly grave, observed, "And—and your fortune, Mr. Fitch?"

"Every penny yours—every penny, when—when I die," and Mr. Fitch straitened his back, and shook his head, and winked his eye, as though he had spoken of the Greek Kalends, or the millennium. Death himself—though about to strike—must have been tickled at the gay self-assurance of brave four-score.

"And the day,—the happy day, Mr. Fitch?"

"Humph! the day? say Thursday, Barney—yes, Thursday. We'll keep the wedding at—at my friend Clay's house—the Fox-and-Goose at Stepney."

Now, Barney, since his affair with the widow Blond, was become less confident of his sorcery over the gentle sex; and had thus, with the wisdom which haunted him through life, felt his way to the affections of Louisa, through the medium of her grandfather. Sure we are that Barney, in all he had said or looked at his bride, had never transgressed the bounds of the coldest drawn civility: the iciest nun had not complained of the warmth of Barney. Louisa having no relative, no friend in the world, save her grandsire, was naturally enough, in the opinion of the venerable man—wholly and unreservedly at his disposal. Having reared her from childhood, he looked upon her as so much live timber, to be carved into any image, after the fancy of the planter. She might—indeed we must say she did—venture some remonstrance; but surely four-score better knew what was fitter for eighteen, than witless eighteen itself. In a word, Louisa Fitch was to marry Barnaby Palms; the bride had received her orders from her rich grandfather—and Thursday was the day appointed.

At length, Barney approached the haven of his hopes. He had felt his way to more than competence; he had now within a hair's breadth of his fingers a rich, a youthful, and not unhandsome bride; though in the main affairs of life, Barney shut his

eyes to what is vulgarly called, and paid for, in some sort of coin —beauty. Blind to outward bloom, he acknowledged virtue by the touch ; and Louisa—on the death of her revered grandsire—was to have ten thousand pounds. In the ears of Barney, the guineas were already ringing on the old man's tomb-stone !

Thursday came. We will not dwell upon the emotions of the bride ; such trifling—the more as it was unconsidered by our hero—accords not with the gravity of our theme—with the deep lesson that we hope to teach. Old Mr. Fitch and some half-dozen friends, all gaiety and smiles, were present ; Barney was in his best, and Louisa was duly shrouded in white. The ceremony was concluded—despite the ominous spectres that even at the altar haunted the bridegroom. It might be the embarrassing novelty of his situation that deceived his senses, for, looking upward, he saw the wings of carved cherubims plumed with real feathers—and snuffing the air, he thought he scented the marine odour of tar. No matter ; Barney was married. Placing the marble hand of his bride under his arm he quitted the church.

Up to this moment, old Mr. Fitch was gay and chirruping : whilst his benevolent tyranny was in course of execution, he was in the highest spirits. The knot, however, was no sooner tied, than—possibly from excess of joy—the old man turned ghastly pale. He was led from the church ; but, ere he could gain the carriage at the gate, was compelled to rest himself ; he sat upon a grave—and Barney approaching, looked at him with an eye of anticipation. With some assistance, Mr. Fitch was placed in the coach ; the party proceeded to the inn, and—the grandfather quickly rallying—there were high hopes of festive dinner. Vain are all earthly promises ! Just as the first course was laid, the old man relapsed—was carried to bed—and, in three hours, was ready for the mattock and the spade. It was supposed that the extreme coldness of the church had quickened his end. We pass much woe and lamentation, to conclude our story.

Barney was the possessor of ten thousand pounds. Had he weakly consulted the wishes of Louisa, they had doubtless passed to another bridegroom : he had—he thanked his wisdom—felt his way through the grandfather !

It struck twelve as Barney sought his bridal couch. He had already one leg in bed, when a bright thought arrested him. Taking a candle, he withdrew from the chamber, to seek the room of the dead man. In good time, Barney had recollected the silly vanity of old Fitch, who was wont to carry in his pockets a thousand or two in bank-paper. This might be stolen ; he, as heir, should instantly seize the property. As he became fully

confirmed in this idea, a current of wind extinguished the candle. For a long time, Barney continued silently to feel his way ; but the Fox-and-Goose was an old, old house—with corridor and passages, and winding staircases, and——

A shriek was heard, and no more !—

A coroner's inquest, sitting next day at the Fox-and-Goose, on the body of a gentleman discovered at the bottom of the stairs, returned a verdict of "Found dead." This was of course in default of evidence that might have been given; otherwise the verdict would have run—"*Died of too much feeling his way.*"

Poor Barney ! he had smiled—nay, in his heart had chuckled —when he saw old Fitch seated on a grave. And now, had Barney himself "felt his way !"

CHRISTOPHER SNUB:

WHO WAS "BORN TO BE HANGED."

CHAPTER I.

It was the fixed opinion of the most discriminating inhabitants of the small town of Hempenfield, that Christopher Snub—better known as that incorrigible little scoundrel Kit Snub—was born to be hanged. Such was the public belief, extending and strengthening with the growth of Kit, from his seventh—so early did his genius show itself—to his seventeenth year; and then, to the sometimes reflecting townsfolk, it seemed somewhat strange that Kit had not been hanged a year or two before. Nevertheless, no man gave up his long-cherished conviction. Kit had, it was true, escaped by miracle; notwithstanding, his doom, though deferred, was certain. Michaelmas would not be more fatal to spring goslings than assizes to Kit. It was a pity thought two or three of the most charitable folk; for the varlet, bating a certain roguish defiance in his eye, and a bad habit of turning all things into laughter, was a handsome and certainly a good-natured boy. It was really to be lamented, but Kit Snub *must* be hanged!

Kit was, in truth, the scamp of his birthplace. To the great satisfaction of all fathers and mothers, he was an imp of mischief. It was to them an exceeding comfort if a garden was robbed, glass broken, the decency of a cobler's stall defiled by tobacco-smoke, henroosts cleared of eggs, or any other social iniquity committed—to know that it was only Kit Snub, and none of their own blessed babes, who could have dreamt of such an atrocity. The very blackness of Kit made all the other boys of Hempenfield as white as snow. Thus he bore upon his single back all the sins of the rising generation of his native town, and,

to the innate wickedness of human nature we must declare it, he skipped as lightly, and laughed as heartily, as though the burden were a grace. Profligate Christopher Snub!

Augustus Doublebrain was a sweet little fellow—a very cherub at full length. He was so civil, so quiet, so meek, so all that a child should be! He had but one fault, he was the companion of Christopher Snub. They played with the same marbles—they flew the same kite—they bit the same apple: that is, when the marbles, the kite, and the apples happened to be Kit's. Otherwise, like "a dear, good child, as he would be without that Snub,"—such were oft the words of his wailing mother—Augustus Doublebrain played and munched alone.

And thus much for the childhood of the two companions—thus much for the early wickedness of Christopher Snub.

"You 'll be sorry for this some day," said a young man to the parish beadle; who, at the insinuation, put on a more majestic look—knit three wrinkles in his official brow at the insolent supposition. *He* sorry—the beadle of Hempenfield sorry!

"Innocence is still innocence, abuse it as you will," continued the speaker, the beadle deigning no rejoinder to the stale, insipid truth.

"I wish I may die, then, if I was in the churchyard!" exclaimed the young man.

The beadle made no reply; but, backing a few paces from the speaker, surveyed him with a lofty self-complacency. Vandyke having bestowed a magic touch upon a portrait—Rembrandt having thrown a sunbeam on the canvas—may have glanced at the new beauty with a like swelling of the heart. No artificer so lowly, no drudge so mean, but that he is sometimes proud of his handiwork. The beadle of Hempenfield felt a flutter at his bosom: he had locked a culprit in the parish stocks, and stood aloof, in brief consideration of his own ability. Reader, the guilty one so stocked was Kit Snub!

"Times is changed," said the beadle, with melancholy voice, shaking his head at Kit; "times is changed; else this had been whipping, too."

"I wasn 't in the churchyard," cried Snub.

"You 'll be hanged, Christopher," said the beadle; "the stocks is a halfway house—a resting-place in the way to the gallows; I always said it, and I shall live to see it; you 'll be hanged!"

Kit cast a furious look at the prophet, and then, regaining his composure, began to whistle a jig.

"Your character 's gone, Christopher; and the sooner you 're

gone after it the better for Hempenfield. Pitch-and-toss in a churchyard! it 's worse," said the beadle, "than Guy Fawkes!"

"For the last time," cried Christopher, "I say I wasn 't there."

"Rattling money among the solemn tombstones," continued the beadle, unmoved by the protestations of Snub; "teasing honest folks in their coffins with the mammon of this world—it 's a wicked aggravation. How would you like it, Kit?"

Kit whistled.

"And to find nobody better for your wickedness, than a gipsy and a tinker! Have you lost all decency?"

"And why didn 't you catch them?" asked Snub. "Then you 'd seen that I knew no more on 'em than the owl in the church ivy. But it 's always the case—there was always a spite in this place against me."

"People of your kidney always calls justice bad names. Spite, i'fackins! Is there to be no godliness in the world—is heads-and-tails to be allowed in a churchyard? But good words is wasted breath upon you. I 'm sorry for it, Kit; for the sake of your dead father—an honest man and the best bowler fifty miles round—I am sorry for it: but, to be sure, what could be hoped when he married Becky Drinkwater, the chambermaid of the Crown,—when your mother——"

It was especially unfortunate for Simon Scoggs, beadle of Hempenfield, that when in the pursuit of his duty, as *censor morum*, he apprehended Christopher Snub on the charge of playing pitch-and-toss, hustle-cap, and other plebeian games of chance, with a tinker and a gipsy, in the sanctuary of the dead,—it was, we repeat, unfortunate for our vigilant functionary—as the sequel shall prove—that Kit was bound for a cricket-match. The beadle was a man of rigid morals, and thought it a favourable opportunity to indulge in reflections upon the late Mrs. Snub—(there ran a legend, that in her maidenhood she had with some contumely rejected Simon Scoggs,)—her son being fast in the stocks. The lion was not defunct. but fast by the legs, when Simon ventured to bray a little. Scarcely, however, had he uttered his first condemnatory note, when he fell—as though struck by the iron club of a giant—upon the earth; a fountain of blood gushing from his nose, defiling his waistcoat, and trickling down his nether garments. Gathering himself bolt upright, the beadle of Hempenfield bled like—like a chancery suitor, or a pig.

Simon Scoggs, his head still swimming, and his eyes striking fire at the same moment, felt his nose and his mistake: he had not searched the person of the culprit; otherwise, in his jacket-pocket he had discovered a cricket-ball, which Kit—he inherited

the unerring eye and steady hand of his father—delivered with a precision readily though not cheerfully acknowledged by the beadle ; who, for a time, thought his nose had followed the eyes of justice—annihilated by the cricket-ball of Kit.

The reader may hastily imagine that our beadle scrambled to his legs, and with meteor eyes and trumpet-voice assailed his assailant. No housewife—her heart broken with some precious china vessel—ever gathered together the fragmentary porcelain with greater care, with a more sorrowing tenderness, than did Simon Scoggs, beadle of Hempenfield, pick himself up limb by limb. He seemed to think his nose—like the nose of the seal—was the seat of vitality, and that he must be all but exanimate. At length, a consciousness of protracted existence dawned dimly upon him ; when, pulling a deep breath, he shook his head, and a sickly smile of satisfaction played about his mouth as he meekly addressed Christopher Snub in the following words : "Yes, it 's a blessed thing to think of—you *must* be hanged."

And Christopher Snub, the last remnant of his good name blown to the winds, sat in the stocks. He felt his innocence, and knew he was a prisoner. Gloomy, desolate thoughts might have fallen on the captive, had he not been weaned from the bitterness of reflection by the society of some half-dozen ragged boys, who, within the very shadow of the stocks, began a game of ring-taw !

(" Alas, regardless of their doom,
The little victims play ! ")

Whereupon, Christopher, who would have brought the same moral energy to a game at push-pin or a game at chess, entered with fullest enjoyment into the sport, counselling, warning, and triumphing with the players. Whether this faculty may be set down to highest philosophy, or to invincible hardness of heart, we leave as matter of argument to moralists. Certain it is, Christopher was in the very heat of the game, when a sound —a dolorous sound—called his attention from the sport. Turning his eyes, he beheld the sorrow-stricken countenance of Augustus Doublebrain.

"I never thought it would come to this, Kit," said Augustus, wringing his hands.

"It 's nothing," said Christopher ; "I shall be out at sunset.—That won't do, Bill Simmons—knuckle down," cried Christopher, to one of the party at taw.

"Bless us, Kit ! " exclaimed Augustus, "can you think of knuckling down in the stocks ? "

"And why not ? " cried Snub.

"With your character gone," urged Doublebrain—"yes, Christopher—your character!"

"I shall leave the village, and get a new one; for you know, Guss, in the matter of character," said Snub, "I can plainly see it—do what you will to keep it whole and sound—luck 's all."

"Don't talk in that hardened way," said Augustus Doublebrain.

"Character 's like a Sunday hat,—you must play at the ring, Sam Small,—it wears longer with some folks, though they don't take more care of it, than with others."

"You really weren't in the churchyard?" asked Doublebrain solicitously.

"No; but it was no use my saying so—they said they 'd got a witness of it, though what witness I don't know; and, more than that, the squire said there was another fact against me."

"The Lord preserve us!" cried Doublebrain. "Another fact! what is it?"

"Once I was caught at what they call defacing the tombstones; and what, Guss, do you think they call defacing?—why, writing Sukey Saunders's name under the heads of some of the cherubims."

"I can't say it was right, Kit—it 's what mother would call heathenish," answered Doublebrain.

"Folks differ, you see," replied Snub. "Howsoever, they said that if I was an infidel—that was the word—infidel enough to write roundhand upon tombstones, I wouldn't stick to cry heads-and-tails among the coffins; and so upon that argument, Guss, here I am."

"That 's no evidence," observed Doublebrain.

"And so I said: 'Granting the first fault,' said I—'I defy the cherubim to prove heads-and-tails.' Then the squire laughed, and then he gives me over to the beadle, who claps me here in the timber. But for all that, you see—Jack Robins," (again, Kit was among the marble-players,) "no funking!"

"And as you weren't in the churchyard with the tinker and the gipsy," said Augustus, "where were you, and what about?"

"Nutting," cried Christopher Snub, with the twinkling of the eye. "Nutting with Polly Spicer."

"She 'll be the ruin of you," said Augustus Doublebrain, with a groan.

"Bless her!" cried Christopher, smacking his lips.

Evening approached. Augustus Doublebrain having delivered himself of his very kindest counsel, squeezed Christopher's hand, leaving him in ignominy and the best spirits. The boys, proud to receive the instruction of Snub, even though dealt from the

stocks, left their marbles for supper and bed: a nightingale preluded fitfully from a neighbouring bush, and Christopher Snub sat in profoundest solitude—that is, with nothing but his innocence—in the parish stocks. Had the beadle forgotten him? Kit pondered on the malice of Scoggs, and then his thoughts wandered to the bloody nose and the cricket-ball. The evening grew darker, and Kit became the more fixed in the belief that the beadle had determined to leave him—out of mere revenge—the whole night, beneath an autumn sky. Gusts of wind made the captive shrink—a drop of rain, prologue to a deluge, fell on Kit's cheek—and cold and hungry, Snub sat in the stocks and shivered. He tried, manfully tried, to abstract his moral self from the desolation around him; and then, as further torment, his errant soul was cheated by the apparition of the "Red Lion" raised upon his hind legs, and looking, as for twenty years he had looked, jauntily for custom, whether of man or beast. Not that the "Red Lion" maintained his time-honoured aspect, for his two forepaws, heretofore scrambling over the sign-board, now, to the imagination of the hungry wretch in the stocks, grasped a platter, wherein hissed and smoked an ample steak, and a pot of ale, with foam like purest fleece. Was it the theory of Aristotle, that men with large hearts have great stomachs? It matters not; Christopher Snub was so organised: his bowels yearned at the vision; and then, smitten with the cheat, declined and fell, yea, almost to fainting. The lion, beef, and ale had vanished, and Christopher sat consorted with hunger and darkness.

The consciousness of innocence is a great support to the human animal; and Kit—moderately assisted by meat and malt—felt that he could have sustained his energies, even in the stocks. But to be left in cold and darkness to pine and starve—hark!

Christopher's ears quickened. Yes! a cloud has just swum before the moon—he cannot well descry him; but, surely, that is the slow, measured step—the tread of authority announcing Scoggs. Past all doubt, thinks Kit—it's Scoggs, the beadle!

Now, Kit was a little in error; it was not the beadle, but a stray jackass.

And the ass boldly approached the stocks, and stared placidly at Christopher—and Christopher, nothing daunted, stared at the ass.

CHAPTER II.

CHRISTOPHER is in the stocks, and his fortune hangs upon an ass! The meek beast, with something like a touch of fellowship, gazes piteously at Snub, and the prisoner, won by the confidence, or compassion, or whatever it is staring from the brute's eyes, pats its head in token of acknowledgment. Here, thought Snub, are a couple of us; children of misery—doomed, undeservedly, to bear the thumps and bitter abuse of folks who think themselves our betters! Here we are, cold, hungry — but at this moment Snub heard footsteps, and dismissing the miseries of the ass from his mind, he thought only of himself. The ass turned from the stocks, and in a minute was seized by a couple of fellows, both of whom began drubbing the beast, and cursing and swearing at it for straying.

"Poor devil!" groaned Christopher; his heart smitten with the blows.

"What 's that?" exclaimed one of the men.

"A voice from the stocks," cried the other; and advancing a few steps, the fellow stood with arms akimbo, and shaking with laughter in front of Snub. "What, is the gaol full, old fellow, that they 've put you out to lodge and board on the common?" asked the man, who seemed by his dirty rags to be a travelling tinker. "Look here, Mike," he cried, and his companion approached the stocks.

Mike was evidently of the gipsy tribe. Surveying Snub, he took off his straw hat, scratched his head, then looking at the legs of Snub, exclaimed with affected pathos, "And they call this a free country!"

"You wouldn't like to get out?" asked the tinker.

"Shouldn't I?" cried Snub.

O, that folks in high places would sometimes emulate the brevity and despatch of the tinker! Without any rhetorical flourish, he put a plain question, and the answer being as plainly returned, lo! in a trice, Christopher's legs were free from the ignominious wood, and he stood stretching himself on the common. It would have been plain to an observing mind, that the dexterity of the tinker at picking a lock, was not wholly a natural gift: there was a confidence of manner, a quickness of finger, that denoted considerable education.

"And now what do you mean to do?" was the query of Snub's

liberator; and never was the question put to a man less able to resolve it.

"It isn't my fault," said Snub; "but, it can't be denied, there 's a hole in my character."

"If you 'll come with us, we 'll tinker it," was the generous offer of the gipsy. Snub was silent; perhaps he doubted the skill of the workman.

"More than that," chimed in the tinker; "we 've a goose for supper."

"My character 's in your hands," cried Snub. "I 'm one of you."

As we do not wish to pass off Snub for an atom better than he is, we will at once declare our suspicion that it was more to his immediate want of goose than to any remote benefit to be conferred on his moral part, that Kit consented to follow his new acquaintance. Christopher had been six hours in the stocks—was cold, hungry, and—but no, we will not dwell upon the forlornness of his condition. A goose for supper! If the reader have any bowels, he must confess the greatness of the temptation. Was it in human nature in such a plight to lean upon character? Goose for supper! Odours from Araby! The seraphic moralist may shut his eyes and pinch his nostrils: Christopher Snub was but mortal man.

"You 'll go with us—eh?" said the tinker. "Well then, as we must make haste, and your legs ar'n't any better for the wooden stockings, you 'd better jump on Rose-in-June, and take this stake."

Immediately Christopher mounted the ass with the fragrant name; and much we fear that, from the manner in which our hero belaboured Rose-in-June, he had altogether forgotten the benevolence that warmed his bosom towards the ass when seated in the stocks. To be sure, there was then no goose for supper.

The ass, obedient to the cudgel, trotted, as he would redeem the character of his tribe from sluggishness; the tinker and the gipsy ran, and in half-an-hour the party halted at a pastoral tent in a green lane. The fire, blazing in front of the tent, warmed the heart's core of Kit; and, whether it was the odour of wild flowers, or the gravy of goose that delicately smote his nostrils, he could not satisfactorily determine: certain it is, his hope inclined to the latter. The tinker and gipsy advanced to the fire, and Christopher dismounting, stood modestly apart. Staring and snuffing in the distance, Kit saw a woman seated by the fire, cooking as he hoped the promised supper: again and again he snuffed; and then his heart felt like a piece of dead flesh, for he

heard the gipsy cry, with all the passion and all the oath worthy of the disappointment, "The goose not come!"

"Where the devil is he?" cried the tinker. He had scarcely spoken, when a man bounced through the hedge; and, after a moment's hesitation on the part of tinker and gipsy, who, grasping their cudgels, took an attitude not expressive of benevolence, the stranger was welcomed with the greatest possible fervour. Kit had cautiously withdrawn himself still farther from his new companions, who, overjoyed by the presence of the last comer, seemed to have forgotten the hospitality due to the late resident in the stocks. He stood, or rather lay apart on the grass, watching with anxious heart and yearning bowels the motions of his friends, who laughed, and as he thought, joked; and then, squatting themselves about the fire, commenced an operation dear to the household recollections of Kit. The goose was come, and it was plain that some of the blessings of civilisation had descended upon the gipsies, for they did not eat their poultry in the feathers.

"How many on 'em did you nab?" inquired the tinker.

"Seven," answered the stranger; "and had a near chance of the old gander."

"You 're a reg'lar good un," cried the gipsy: "but we feared you 'd ha' forgotten the priggery."

"'Tisn't in my nature," said the stranger. "To be sure, I had a good run for it from the churchyard, and I didn't think mysel. safe till I heard they 'd got hold of Kit."

"Who 's Kit?" asked the gipsy.

"Why, Kit 's a nincompoop," answered the finder of the supper.

Christopher no sooner heard this opinion passed upon if not himself, at least upon a namesake, than he raised himself upon his legs, and silently as a rabbit moved towards the tent.

"Nothing but a nincompoop; at school he used to take my floggings, and now—ha! ha!—I shouldn't wonder if he was to be hanged in mistake for me some of these days."

There was something so irresistibly droll in the picture—in the mere idea of throttling an innocent man, and purely in mistake for the true offender, that the whole party roared with laughter.

"You see, when we were started from the churchyard, I took to my heels and ran home to my master. Well, you can't think the relief it was to me to hear that they 'd taken up Kit Snub: and how do you think it came about? Why, they found his hat, with his name in it, in the churchyard. Now—

ha! ha! I shall kill myself with laughing—ha! ha! ha! who do you think left his hat there?"

"Augustus Doublebrain!" shouted Christopher Snub, and Augustus, dropping the stolen poultry, gazed aghast at his long-suffering companion. Kit was a peaceable, good-tempered creature; but the thoughts of his unmerited ignominy in the stocks rushing upon him, he suddenly found his fingers at the throat of Augustus Doublebrain; whilst the body of that very adroit person twisted and writhed like an eel, and his face became almost as black as his heart.

"You wouldn't murder the young man!" exclaimed the gipsy.

"Are you a christian?" asked the tinker.

Kit released his wronger; who, gasping like a landed fish, in a moment caught Christopher in his arms, and we believe—for it was too dark for Kit to see them—with tears rolling down his cheeks, vowed that he was determined to die in that posture, unless Snub immediately forgave him. "I did everything for the best," cried the weeping Doublebrain.

"Put me in the stocks!" said Christopher, sullenly.

"All for the best," repeated Doublebrain, grounded for words, though not for tears.

"Blasted my character!" exclaimed Snub, with rising wrath.

"What 's character?" asked the tinker.

"Is it good *sarce* for ducks?" inquired the gipsy, "if so, hand us over some. What 's the use of blubbering like a baby?" said the Bohemian to the still streaming Doublebrain. "Squat, I say, squat."

"And pick the ducks like a man," added the female; for the first time, strange to say, joining in the argument.

Though Doublebrain was smitten to the soul by the reproaches of Snub, he nevertheless felt that, in common with all men, he had social duties to perform; and therefore, though choking with private sorrow, he repressed his tears, and sat him down to pick the ducks.

"You 'll lick your chops at 'em I dare say," said the tinker to Snub, "so here, just strip this fellow to the buff," and with the word, the speaker threw a dead drake to Christopher.

"I wouldn 't touch one of 'em for the world," cried Christopner.

"Why, we know we promised you a goose; but as things has turned up, it isn 't to be done. What of that? Is anything certain in this world? Why should you be so nice? When we can't get a goose, let 's thank our stars, and without complaint do as well as we can with two ducks!"

The ducks were picked with great dispatch, though Christopher

lent no hand to the work. Silent and apart he leaned against a tree, and though resolved to touch no morsel of the stolen goods, he was still held by some unaccountable fascination to the spot, watching the roasting poultry, and—martyr to his bowels—smelling its reeking odour. The tinker and gipsy laughed, and the woman bustled about the fire; poor Augustus Doublebrain, with his eye upon the ducks and his hand upon his heart, groaning occasionally. He felt a growing appetite, and mourned a departed friend.

In a brief time supper was served. Christopher drew closer to the fire, and seated himself upon the grass: nevertheless, he was still determined to taste no piece of the ducks, though much pressed thereto by the tinker, the gipsy, and the woman.

"It will do you no good;" said Christopher, as the feeders tore and gnawed the stolen property; "depend upon it, 'twill do you no good."

How often is this belief the barren satisfaction of hungry virtue! How often does famishing innocence, watching the wicked feeders of the world—the gorbellied varlets, with mouths greasy with the goods of cheated worth—find comfort in the belief that "it will do them no good!" Lean virtue shakes the head, and cries, "It will do you no good," and rapine still keeps greasy in the face, still grows "a finger on the ribs."

Christopher continued to exclaim to the unthinking Augustus, "It will do you no good;" though we will not deny that at every repetition of the warning, the moralist shuffled closer to the fire, and despite of himself, smacked his lips with louder smack. For the tenth time Snub, with his hand within an inch of a fat duck, cried, "It will do you no good," when a shout was set up—a scuffle ensued—his feasted companions took to their heels—and the virtuous Christopher, with belly empty as a poor-box, sat and shivered on the grass in custody of the beadle and the constable.

The robbery had been found out; the flight of Snub discovered; and escaped culprit, and stolen ducks traced by the vigilant functionaries of Hempenfield to the green lane. Christopher Snub was "born to be hanged."

CHAPTER III.

It was particularly fortunate for Christopher that the assizes were near at hand: we say fortunate, for he was spared a dull, heavy season of doubt; and, as he was charged with an atrocious offence, with a crime rendered more iniquitous by the late frequency of its commission, Snub was in that post of danger occupied at times by a culprit who is to be manufactured into an example. To steal a certain number of ducks is, it must be allowed, a wrong done to society; but to commit the theft, after many other like robberies by other folks, is, it would seem, a still greater wrong: hence, when six pickers and stealers of ducks are merely transported, the seventh robber of the like domestic fowl shall be hanged! If it be asked—Wherefore? The philosophy of the law answers,—Because the thief came late into the field: had he been only the sixth robber he had been a transported felon; being the seventh, he must be a throttled example. Now Christopher Snub was at least the seventh. It was clear that he was born to be hanged—that is, born for an example.

Still Christopher had a chance of escape. The great point of danger to be considered by himself and friends was, not the wickedness of the culprit, but the judge who was to try him. If Justice Butter, a short imprisonment and whipping might be the worst; if, on the other hand, Mr. Baron Sus-per-coll, then was Christopher Snub no better than an example; that is, a dead thief.

Luckless Christopher! To be sure thou wilt but fulfil thy destiny; thou wert born to be hanged, and thy execution is as good as ordered; for already, hear the trumpets! Hark! how they bray forth the dread approach of Baron Sus-per-coll!

The Baron, unlike many men of worldly fame, deserved his reputation. To hang was with him, not so much a duty as a passion. Early in life he had been possessed with the solemn impulse: when at school, all his pocket-money was expended to purchase dogs and cats, to be treated according to his early principles of justice; in familiar phrase, hanged. His tree of social liberty was the tree that grew at Tyburn; the Gordian knot of policy, a nice new hempen halter. The black cap was the cap he would have always worn: he never felt so easy, warm, and truly comfortable as when it graced his head. He

could have gone to bed in it. Strange it was that the cap, like the hidden spring in some garden statues, no sooner touched the Baron than it drew water down his cheeks: though seemingly only a piece of stone before, Baron Sus-per-coll played from the bench on the prisoner in the dock a very fountain of sympathy. He never hanged but he cried; and, as he never lost an opportunity of hanging, we may conclude, that, like ladies in hysterics, crying did him a world of good. The end of poor Baron Sus-per-coll—for he died (for a judge) at the untimely age of eighty-four, and really in the full possession of all the faculties left him, was hastened by his aqueous feelings. He had passed sentence on a miscreant, a famishing weaver, who had stolen a dish of giblets from a poulterer's, and the Baron had wept exceedingly. Unfortunately, he had come on the circuit with a new servant, and the domestic had failed to dry his lordship's ermine for the next day's business. The robe was, as usual, drenched with tears; it was the winter circuit, and the damp struck to the Baron's chest. It was plain that he was about to depart for a world, which he had done all in his judicial power to render populous. Still, he rallied nobly; but happening in the same circuit to have a maiden assize, the unexpected blow concluded the work. With a sickly, mortal smile, Baron Sus-per-coll received the white gloves, and immediately took to his bed. For an hour or two before his death his senses wandered; for he insisted upon having the black cap brought to his bedside, then put it upon his head, sat bolt upright, and commenced, in the most pathetic terms, passing sentence upon himself! He began by condemning himself as an old and hardened offender; congratulated himself that he had been tried by an inflexible and enlightened jury; congratulated the country that he himself would be hanged, for he was a pest, a blot, an ulcer to society; and then conjured himself to make the most of the time that remained to him; forbidding himself to hope for the least mercy in this world, but to trust only to the mercy of the next. He then, wiping his eyes very often with the sheet, said that nothing more remained to himself but to pass sentence upon himself: that the sentence was, that he should be taken to whence he came, and hanged by the neck until he was dead. "And Mr. Baron Sus-per-coll," these were the Baron's last delirious words, "may the Lord have mercy on your soul!" Saying this, the judge laid himself upon his pillow, and, the black cap still upon his head, died! To our story.

The stolen ducks, or rather the heads of some of them, had been found in the possession of Christopher Snub; the owners of the birds could swear to the property; Baron Sus-per-coll

was to try the prisoner; and the prophecy of the good folks of Hempenfield was about to be fulfilled—"Christopher Snub was born to be hanged." Another circumstance added mightily to the prejudice against the prisoner. That pious, civil, well-meaning young man, Augustus Doublebrain, had run away from the town; no doubt inveigled to the imprudence by the bad example and wicked counsel of Kit Snub.

The trial of the prisoner approached. Kit was placed at the bar, and confident of his innocence looked, in the opinion of his Hempenfield neighbours, a brazen, guilty varlet. He ought to have been bent, weighed down, crushed by a sense of his iniquity, but he stood upright as a wand, and gazed about him very tranquilly. The case was opened, and very early in the trial, Mr. Baron Sus-per-coll felt a certain moisture at the eyes indicative of the coming torrent. The waters were rising—it was clear that Kit Snub was born to be hanged. The owner of the ducks was examined, to quote the report in the county paper, at "considerable length." The bodies of the ducks had been consumed: their fragmentary bones were found strewn on the greensward, but two heads were found entire. The witness had not the slightest doubt that such heads were the property of his late ducks; he would no more hesitate at swearing to his ducks than to his children. An outhouse had been forcibly entered, and four of the ducks carried off; the heads produced in court belonged to two of them—one to the drake, *that* he would swear. It was impossible for him to be mistaken; he had reared the ducks from the shell; had fed them every day, and would pick them out from a thousand; witness was fully aware of the solemnity of an oath, and was perfectly ready to swear to *all that*.

Mr. Baron Sus-per-coll, among other antipathies, could not endure a pragmatic witness. As the owner of the ducks proceeded in his testimony, the judge felt more than ordinarily annoyed and twitted by the impudent confidence of the vulgar fellow; hence, by a sudden revulsion of feeling, the Baron's sympathies were quickened for the prisoner at the bar. The witness continued to speak with indecorous glibness, Baron Sus-per-coll exclaiming to himself, and sufficiently loud to be heard all over the court,—"pooh, pooh!" "pshaw!" "tut, tut!" "foolish fellow!" "how can he swear it?"

"And you take your oath that this is the head of your drake?" asked the counsel, for the tenth and last time.

"I do," answered the witness: "I could swear it until to-morrow morning."

"Pooh, pooh, pooh!" cried the Baron loudly, as was his wont,

to himself; "one drake's head is like another drake's head. as one duck's egg is like another duck's egg."

The counsel for the prosecution had finished the task, when the prisoner's counsel, who sat immediately under the bench, and had heard every syllable uttered by the judge, jumped to his feet with great alacrity. "Stay, my good man," said the counsel, "let me put to you this simple question. Remember, you are upon your oath; and on your oath answer me—if one drake's head isn't like another drake's head, as one duck's egg is like another duck's egg?"

The pen fell from the hand of Baron Sus-per-coll; his face assumed the most solemn aspect; and, the silent witness scratching his head the while, the Baron slowly rose from his seat, and leaning over his desk, said to the prisoner's counsel, "Mr. Mantrap, I see the finger of Heaven in this trial: the question you have so admirably, so pithily put to the witness, was at the very moment passing through my brain." Still the witness scratched his head: when the judge turning from him with something like a contemptuous glance, said to the jury, "Gentlemen, the prisoner must be discharged: there is no case." The late prisoner readily taking the judge at his word, was for running out of the dock, when he was solemnly addressed by Mr. Baron Sus-per-coll. "Christopher Snub, you have had a most fortunate escape: whether or not you stole this good man's ducks, is the inscrutable secret of your own breast. However this may be, you owe the deepest debt of obligation to the wisdom, the forethought, the admirable sagacity of your counsel. It might have gone far otherwise with you: and when I consider the frequency of these attacks upon the sanctity of private property—when I feel the imperative call of society for some example, it becomes my painful duty"—and at these words Baron Sus-per-coll, by the mere force of custom, began to weep—"to implore you to make the most of the time allotted to you; to entreat you to lay aside all earthly hope, and to trust only for—eh?—oh!—ha! bless me, I'd forgot"—and the Baron hastily dried his streaming eyes, remembering that Christopher was not to be executed, but discharged. In an instant, all the native terrors of the judge returned, and, in a voice of thunder, Baron Sus-per-coll exclaimed to Snub, "Fellow, you have had a narrow escape; don't come here again!"

The people of Hempenfield were astonished at the non-fulfilment of the old prediction. Until at soonest the next assizes, Christopher Snub, though born for the destiny, could not be hanged!

Cristopher Snub was discharged with the bloom of the county

gaol upon his name. In the eye of the law he was innocence itself: vain solace against the significant winkings of his early neighbours! What was he to do?—whither, in his tribulation, was he to guide his steps? A thousand times did he curse the chance that flung him into the company of that false friend, Doublebrain! When Christopher quitted prison, his worldly wealth was ten shillings. For a whole day, he walked the fields and lanes, skulking like a poacher. Twenty times he sat himself under a hedge; twenty times pulling his fortune from his pocket, displaying the coin in his hand, and staring at it as if he hoped to obtain counsel from the silver pieces. He had read of London Lord Mayors—of golden merchants—who, some with not more than a crown in their pockets, and some with not a farthing, had walked to London, treading its flinty streets with unsoled shoes; other men had had smaller beginnings than himself: why should he despair? His bundle held three shirts and two pair of stockings; his coat was sound, his shoes whole, his hat all but new. A pin for the bad odour of a gaol! That would never be found out in London: he was determined; he would sneak towards Hempenfield; take a farewell of lovely Polly Spicer, and gird up his loins for a pilgrimage to town. Such was the manful determination of Christopher. For the last time he took out his ten shillings, and counting them as they lay in his hand, was deeply meditating on the least possible sum to be expended on the road. He was at least a hundred and fifty miles from London: and he pondered on the separate claims of two or three shillings as sufficient for travelling expenses. He sat, with the money in his hand, absorbed by the perplexing question. How often vain is all human speculation: for at the very moment that Christopher decided to pinch his anatomy by allowing to it only two shillings, resolving to enter London with the unbroken eight,—at that very instant, a fellow presented a pistol at the head of Christopher, with the highway laconism of "your money or your life!"

Christopher was no coward; still there is something in a cocked pistol, held about three inches from the *os frontis*, that is apt to confound the stoutest heart. Snub, thunderstruck by the demand, cried in a doubtful voice, "You wouldn't rob *me?*"

"Money or your life," was briefly repeated by the thief, who showed no emotion, if he felt it, at the appeal, for his face was adorned with a black mask.

"I'm just out of gaol myself," said Christopher, thinking that as nominally one of the thief's fraternity, he ought to tread the highway scot-free.

"It 's a lie," said the highwayman ; indirectly complimenting Christopher's honesty at the expense of his truth.

"Upon my soul I am," cried Snub ; "I 've been tried for rob bery, and got off," for Snub thought it might considerably damage him with the highwayman if he protested his innocence. "It was all over with me as I thought, but luck turned up, and I escaped through a flaw."

"And what did you steal ?" asked the highwayman.

"Four ducks," answered Christopher, very meekly.

"Why, you paltry, contemptible scoundrel," cried the footpad, in great indignation ; "it 's such sneaking vagabonds as you that bring disgrace upon robbery. Four ducks !"

"We—we broke open an outhouse, and they were all we could find," cried Snub in extenuation.

"Money or your life," growled the highwayman ; and having looked at the pistol flint, he presented the weapon an inch nearer the brain of the duck-stealer. Still Snub hesitated ; an instant, and he would have made a dash at the highwayman, when glancing aside, he saw in the distance two men, companions of the thief, serenely watching the professional powers of their friend. "Another minute," said the impatient highwayman, "and I 'll leave you for the crows ;" some of those unclean birds being at the moment very audible. With a deep groan, and his eyes riveted on the pistol, Christopher surrendered his ten shillings. He must now enter London—if ever he got there—without a farthing !

"I 'm going to town," cried Snub, in a vain endeavour to move the thief's compassion ; "at least give me something back. How am I to live ?"

"There 's plenty of ducks on the road," said the hard-hearted highwayman. "And now, my friend, I 'll trouble you for your coat and waistcoat."

"You 'll never strip me ?" exclaimed Christopher.

"Wouldn't be so cruel," answered the thief, who taking off his coat and waistcoat, indicated by the act that he only proposed to make a benevolent exchange. The highwayman's friends stood apart, laughing hugely at the drollery of their companion. Snub felt it was in vain to resist, hence he threw his garments on the ground, which were more speedily picked up and put on by the despoiler. "A very nice beaver, indeed, and our heads both of a size ;" said the thief, taking the hat of Christopher, and crowning him in exchange with a misshapen piece of greasy felt.

"And will you leave me in this state ? will you leave me nothing ?" asked Snub in despair.

"No, my friend," answered the highwayman, with a pleasant

familiarity; "I leave you my hat, my coat, my waistcoat, and with 'em this little bit of advice. You see there was a small rumpus at a house in this neighbourhood last night; we call it an affair of plate-chest, the law would call it burglary. Now, my excellent friend, if by any chance, you should be invited to take dinner at Mr. Doublechin's, Manna Lodge, listen to my advice, and don't go in that coat." So spake the highwayman, and in two minutes, Christopher Snub penniless, and with nothing but the cast skin of a burglar to creep into—with nought but a coat, with felony and conviction in the very web of it—stood shivering to the winds of heaven. What could he do? Should he return to the first house and give an alarm, denouncing the robbers? Who would believe him—him whose name was tainted with four stolen ducks? Again, if he lingered in the neighbourhood, he might be apprehended as an accessory after the fact! He had but one resource; it was not twenty miles to the coast, and giving up his cherished hope of seeing Polly Spicer—of renewing his vows of fidelity for ever and ever—he turned from the road, and with heavy heart trudged his way towards the "melancholy main." We will not follow Christopher through every petty incident; but shall at once inform the reader that, after much supplication, Snub induced the captain of a trader to take him aboard his vessel; though, in the ingenuous language of the commander, Kit was not for some time to consider himself a bit better than as so much live lumber.

CHAPTER IV.

For five years was Christopher Snub tossed upon the sea. Being expressly born to be hanged, the dangers of the ocean were, however, no dangers to him. He had been insured by fate against a drowning death: like a cork, he might be restlessly thrown about upon the waters, and like a cork, would never go to the bottom. For five years was Snub a sailor, and next behold him a slave: a Christian slave, toiling under the tyranny of a Moorish master. Christopher's ship was taken by a set of heathenish buccaneers, and its gallant crew parcelled out and sold in separate lots in the slave-market. As Snub stood to be bought, as he felt himself nothing more than a bale of merchandise, to be bargained and huckstered for, the tears started to his eyes, and he lapsed into a day-dream. Again he saw his native

common, again he heard his contemporary geese; again he beheld the stocks! Scoggs the beadle, moved majestically before him; Polly Spicer tripped like a wood-nymph by; Augustus Doublebrain,—but as Christopher pondered on the fox-like features of his early friend, the good man who owned Snub, and was anxious to turn him into money, visited his naked shoulders with a lash that instantaneously brought his reflections back to a Barbary slave-market. "What do you think of him?" said the human flesh-dealer; "if you want an active, strong slave, a fellow for hard work, you can't do better: not too much flesh, you see, and not too thin." This recommendation of Christopher was addressed to an old Moor of venerable aspect, who eyed the article with some distrust. "An Englishman, eh? humph! I have already a slave of that nation: a lazy, sneaking cur, that I 'd sell again for half the money he cost me. How much do you ask for this dog of a Christian?" Snub's owner taking the Moor by the sleeve, stepped aside, and the bargaining began. It was plain to Christopher, that the seller extolled his many virtues to the skies, whilst the buyer with equal energy, denied both their number and excellence. After much higgling, the slave-dealer struck the bargain, and passing over Snub to the Moor, said "Go; follow your master."

"Woe is me!" cried Snub in the bitterness of his anguish, "better had it been to have staid at home, and been hanged on a Christian gallows, than to live to be sold to a wicked stony-hearted old Turk; to wear out my days under the lash and the bastinado." In justice to the Moor, we must observe that he was much wronged by the hard thoughts of his new bondsman. Muley Hassan Ali Bibbubbob was a gentle master; he set too high a value on his slaves to damage them very much by excessive punishment: the bastinado was certainly not unknown on his estate, and now and then he would feel it necessary, but all for the benefit of an example, to bow-string an offender; this, however, happened but rarely: a month at least had elapsed since the last execution, when Christopher became the lawful property of Muley Hassan Ali Bibbubbob.

Snub had no sooner arrived at his master's dwelling, than he was set to work, digging, fetching, and carrying on the grounds; with sunset his labour ceased, and he was ordered to go to rest, to betake himself to the hovel where the other Christian dog was kennelled. Snub approached the hut: but ere he reached the threshold, the slave, his brother in misery, uttering a loud cry, ran to meet him, embracing him with the greatest passion. "This is a happiness—this is a delight!—O Christopher! what great good-luck brought you to this place?"

Snub started at the voice, and releasing himself from the arms of his new companion, at length discovered in the gaunt frame, and worn and harassed features of the slave, his early, his fatal friend, Augustus Doublebrain. To him did Christopher owe disgrace, imprisonment, exile, and slavery; yet could he not repress his tears, and again and again he embraced him like a brother. "Lord! Augustus! what brought you here?" exclaimed Christopher; and Augustus briefly told his melancholy history; so briefly, that he left out many things which, in the judgment of a biographer, might have given a very bold marking to the narrative. He could not, however, sufficiently condemn the villany, the meanness, the ingratitude of the gipsy and the tinker: for they, fearing that he might on some occasions tell ugly truths of them for the service of morality, lured him to the sea-side; when there, threw him into the hands of a crimp, and he was borne far from the country of his fathers, in a filthy, wretched ship destined to become the prey of a crew of pirates. In a word, he was sold to his present master, whom he had served for two years.

"And we shall live and die here," cried Christopher in despair.

"I don't think I shall, Kit," said Doublebrain; "for my uncle has grown rich, and I have sent to him that he may learn my sad condition, and begged him to pay my ransom."

"If he should send money enough for both!" exclaimed the hopeful Snub.

"I don't think that likely," answered the comfortless Augustus; then, hastily waiving the subject, he begged to know the adventures of his friend. Christopher told his story, omitting no incident. He particularly dwelt on the inhumanity of the highwayman who stripped him; a circumstance he might as well have passed in silence; inasmuch as that Doublebrain had had a very favourable view of the whole scene; a truth, however, that even in slavery he did not care to make known to Christopher.

"You have had your troubles, indeed, Kit," said Augustus, onveniently forgetting their origin; "still, after all these trials, it 's something to meet with an old friend. I can't pretend to say how *you* feel; but for my part, I 'm delighted to see you."

"What 's past is gone," said Snub after a struggle. "So, once again, Augustus, there 's my hand. And now what sort of a master is this Turk of ours?"

"An ogre, worse than an ogre, Kit; he has bagged three wives since I 've been with him."

"Bagged 'em!" cried Kit.

"He thought they winked under their veils at the slaves; and pop they went into a sack, and souse into the sea. That 's their law of divorce in Barbary, and every husband 's his own judge."

"Are the women very beautiful?" asked Christopher.

Doublebrain shivered at the question. "I hav 'n't looked, Kit; I wouldn't open my eyes to 'em, not if they 'd go down upon their knees and ask me. I hear they 're beautiful as angels, and I 'm content to take folks' word for the matter."

Days, and weeks, and months pass on, and Christopher has worn out a year of bondage. His gaiety of spirits supports him under his chains, but Doublebrain becomes every day more touchy and querulous. Hearing nothing from his uncle, he concludes that he must die a slave; seeking satisfaction in his abuse of Christopher for his cheerfulness. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself," he would say; "you can 't have a Briton's love for his country, or you wouldn't be so happy with heathens."

For a month past, Christopher had worked in the part of the gardens adjoining the apartments of the old Moor's twenty wives. Often his heart would beat with recollections of Polly Spicer, as some veiled fair one would pass by: oft was he about to raise his eyes, when he thought of his head, and ventured not a look. Day after day he had this contest with his curiosity, and night came and he was still triumphant. One evening, however, when about to cease labour, he heard the softest, most delicious voice breathing a Moorish melody; it was plain, the singer was in a bower not fifty paces from Christopher; he was determined; he would look upon the face of the warbler; and walking on tiptoe towards the spot, he raised his eyes, and beheld not only one of the Moor's wives, but the awful old husband himself squatted at his pipe. The woman screamed; Muley jumped to his feet, and Christopher Snub took to his legs. The insulted wife saw that the offender was one of the two Christians, but which she knew not. Muley Hassan promised her the culprit's head with all the readiness of a doting husband.

The Christian slaves, to the peculiar horror of Augustus, were straightway summoned before their master. Kit soundly protested that he was innocent of the charge laid to him, and Doublebrain, weeping a river, offered to take his oath upon any book in the world that he was guiltless as a lamb. The Turk, sand-blind heathen as he was, had some glimpse of justice. His first thought was to strike off the heads of both his slaves without further notice: he next decided to give them three days' grace. If in that time the one culprit confessed his fault, he

alone should suffer the death of a dog, for he should be hanged. If he remained stubborn, both should perish. The conversation that ensued and was protracted throughout the night between the two friends, was peculiarly animated.

"You 're a fine fellow; always were a fine fellow, and can't be nothing but a fine fellow; and so, my dear Kit, I know you 'll tell the truth, and save your friend."

"It will be a comfort for us to die together," said Christopher.

"But it 's mean, it 's infamous; it 's the worst of wickedness to make another man suffer for our own fault," cried Doublebrain.

"Quack, quack, quack," answered Snub; but Doublebrain had evidently forgotten all about the four ducks.

"But my dear Kit, you wouldn't sacrifice the head of a friend?"

"Heads or tails," observed Christopher, with a lively recollection of the churchyard and the stocks.

All the arguments of Doublebrain were useless, and terrified by the stubbornness of his friend, Augustus became suddenly ill. The Moor, resolved not to be baulked of his justice, sent the doctor to the Christian slave; and that learned man, having drenched and bled the patient even beyond all medical example, pronounced him to be dying. The doctor quitted Doublebrain, assuring him that it was impossible he could live out the day.

"I 'm dying," said Augustus to Christopher; and for once the truth seemed in his face. "I 'm dying: and, as there has been something wrong between us, you won't at this time bear malice?"

"Not I," cried Kit, "I forgive everything; only promise to do me a last favour. As you must die, my dear friend, do take this little fault upon yourself."

"What—the—the Moor's wife?" cried Augustus.

"I sat in the stocks for your pitch-and-toss—I bore the weight of your stolen ducks," observed Christopher.

"Perhaps I may recover," said Doublebrain.

"Impossible," said Snub.

"But if I should get better?" cried Augustus.

"You 're a dead man," asseverated Christopher.

The patient became worse and worse, and believing himself at the last gasp, he confessed that he was the culprit; that he had dared to look upon the Moor's wife.

It was very strange, but Augustus had no sooner made such confession, than he immediately became better. His recovery was even more sudden than his sickness; and in three days he was restored for—the bowstring. In vain did Augustus vow that

he had lied to serve his friend; in vain did he call upon Christopher to own his guilt like a man; Christopher shook his head; and the Moor holding to his purpose, Augustus Doublebrain was strangled.

Unhappy Doublebrain! Only three days after his death, his ransom, sent by his uncle, was proffered to the Moor, who saying nothing of the mishap that had befallen the dead man, delivered in his place the living Christopher.

Snub returned home, married Polly Spicer: became a thriving tradesman, and—a stone in Hempenfield churchyard records the fact—died in his bed at the age of sixty-and-three.

Let no man prophesy that any scapegrace is "born to be hanged."

CRESO QUATTRINO:

THE MAN "WHO DIED RICH."

It was noon, and the citizens of learned Padua swarmed towards the Palazzo de Ragione. It was plain, there was some show afoot: some quacksalver hot from Venice; or, perhaps, some beatific Filippo Neri, with new-made relics, fresh from Rome. Of a surety, it was something rare and strange that drew hundreds as one man towards the same spot.

"'Tis forty years since such a thing was seen," said an old man whose shaking hand grasped a staff, and who, leaning on the shoulder of his grandson, hobbled onwards as though he hastened to a shrine where youth and health might be had for kneeling.

"Ha! ha! that I should live to see this!" crowed a withered beldam, and she clapt her hands and sprang forward like a witch to her Sabbath.

"Could any man have looked for it?" asked a grave tradesman of his neighbour, as they both went with the crowd.

It seemed that all the people of Padua were assembled at the Hall. It was with much labour that the city-guards kept back the multitude close-wedged, so vigorously did every one press to behold—what?

A criminal, in shameful nakedness, seated on a low, round stone at the end of the Hall—on the *Stone of Infamy*. The culprit was an old man, with that in his face which makes old age terrible. Years lay heavily upon his back, but a defying scorn had, for a time, flung off the load, and he sat upright as a staff. He sat, and his eyes glowed like burning coals upon the crowd that pressed to stare at him. He looked back the looks of hundreds, who quailed from his eyes as from the eyes of a snake. Many a rejoicing foe who came to chuckle at the sight shrank back, still fearful of his ancient enemy. There was a tumult in the heart of the old man—a fire in his brain—as he caught the

eager face of many a fellow-citizen; and he would tighten his arms across his breast as though holding in a passion that swelled to burst it. Old Creso Quattrino sat nakedly upon the stone of infamy—his grave was dug at his foot—and yet no despot from his throne could have looked more fiercely, more contemptuously around him. The crowd heeded not the fate of the victim, but—his grave was dug at his living foot.

Creso Quattrino was the youngest son of a noble, though impoverished, house. His elder brothers talked of glory, and cut their daily bread with hired-out swords. One by one, they died in their vocation, and still the eulogy that Creso uttered over each was—"fool." Creso, in early life, became a trader; it was his one hope to "die rich;" it would be his glory to quit life leaving heavy coffers. Fortune smiled upon his desire; and ere the mouth of his first brother was stopped with the bloody mire of fame, Creso could have thrice outweighed the helm, cuirass, and sword of the immortal warrior with merchant's gold. His four brothers, hired by four different states, died in battle. "They have their laurels," Creso would cry, with a sneering humility,—"I have only ducats. They are sleeping on the wide bed of glory, and when the historian shall some day make known that in such a skirmish such a king was repulsed, such a duke was victorious, such a count kept his ground with a trifling loss, he will write in everlasting words the glowing epitaphs of my happy brothers."

This humour increased with the wealth, with the years of Creso. With him, gold was power—was reputation: no strength could overcome it—no shame could tarnish it. He looked upon his ducats as kings look upon their mercenaries—the instruments of his will, the sure doers of his behests, however vile and ruthless. He was that squalid despot—a tyrannous miser. And he would *die* rich!

Creso was past forty, when, with his gold he bought himself a wife—a creature of lustrous beauty—the eldest child of Marco Spori, a poor trader of Padua. Marco was doomed for a petty sum in the books of the man of wealth: early and late he toiled to pay his creditor, and still some new misfortune made the labour vain. Creso, with a grim smile, would proffer further aid, and then would praise the gentle looks of Marianna.

"No, Messer Quattrino," cried Marco, awakening to the meaning of his patron, "Marianna is wedded."

"Wedded!" exclaimed Quattrino, and his face darkened—"wedded!"

"In promise," said Marco; "'tis all as one, Messer Quattrino."

"Betrothed? To whom, friend Marco?" asked Quattrino,

with constrained composure; for love, before unknown to the miser, had made him like one possessed.

"To Pietro Leti."

"Doubtless, some wealthy merchant? No? Humph! A scholar, perhaps, with a tongue silvery as Satan's? Is your future son-in-law, good Marco Spori, of the 'Inflammati,' or"—

"He rents a little vineyard," replied Marco, unmoved by the malignant banter of his creditor. "His father lived and died upon it—a happy old man. Why should not Pietro?"

"And you will give your child—the tender, the beautiful Marianna, to hopeless poverty? You will blast that beauty with early care? You will fling her a prey to the tooth of want?" said Creso.

"She will be poor—granted. Wherefore should she not be happy?" asked Marco.

"The poor cannot be happy. Never open your eyes, man; I speak a plain truth—a truth the rich well know, but never preach. No; it is their trick, folding their purple round them, to hymn the praise of low estate—to paint the happy carelessness of rags—the excellence of appetite begotten by hard drudgery. Poverty! Of all the arrows shot at our miserable nature, is there one that is not made the keener if whetted on the poor man's hearth?"

"That is true," said Marco, despondingly—"too true, Messer Quattrino."

"What is your state now, while I speak, Marco Spori? Are you not hunted—even as a wild beast, hunted? Have you a tranquil thought? Is there one fibre of your heart that is not pulled at by a care? You have children, too—things sent, they say, to bless and crown you. But, then, good Marco, they sometimes want a supper: and oh! the blessing."

"Do not, Messer Quattrino—for the saints' sake! do not," exclaimed Marco, lifting his clasped hands entreatingly.

"There is no physician, but gold; trust me, there is not; and when gold fails, believe it, there is no comforter but death." Such was the creed of Creso Quattrino.

Marco sought his desolate home. As he lifted the latch, his heart quailed at the laughing voices of his younger children. Marianna read the thoughts of her father in his eyes. He sank upon a stool, and for a moment, placed his face in his hands; then, looking vacantly at his daughter, he uttered—"Yes; 'twill be the best—that I should have thought of it!—it will be the best."

"What, father? Tell me, what?" asked Marianna, winding her arms about his neck.

"To end this,—and there is but one way. Yes, I will make

myself a show for the people of Padua—what matters it? 'Tis but an hour—and shall I not be free?"

"Father!"——

"Every hope has left me, Marianna; turn where I will, I meet with scornful or with threatening faces. But there is yet a law in Padua, a kind law for the bankrupt," said Marco, shuddering.

"What law? You do not mean?"——

"The *Stone of Infamy*," cried the father, his flesh quivering as he spoke. "'Tis but to sit an hour there—to sit and be stared at, and such is the good law, my creditors are paid." *

"And you will sit upon that stone?" asked Marianna.

"I must—I will," groaned Marco.

"When, father—when?" cried the girl.

"To-morrow—if heaven will make me live—to-morrow," said Marco, and his head fell upon his bosom.

Marianna quitted her home, but in less than two hours returned. Her father sprang to his feet, as at the coming of a ghost. "Blessed Mother! Marianna!" cried Marco, staring at the white face, the cold eyes of his child. "What is this?" he exclaimed, as she held a purse towards him.

"Gold, father! gold," said Marianna.

"How got—how come by?" raved the father, for suddenly the wildest fears possessed him.

"You are saved from shame,"—said the girl—"from worse than death."

"How! Speak! Marianna; how?" exclaimed Marco.

"I am the wife of Creso Quattrino," answered Marianna; and as she spoke, she fell like a dead thing to the ground.

From the night Marianna became the wife of Quattrino, she smiled but once: it was when she kissed her new-born girl—a babe that, in one brief hour, was motherless. For three years, had Marianna lived a life of silent anguish. Her husband loathed her for the indifference with which she looked upon his wealth—for the coldness with which she listened to his golden schemes—his bargains made upon ignorance or want. He felt—and the thought haunted him like a demon—that he had bought a victim, not wedded a partner. He felt himself, with all his wealth, humbled before the simple nature of Marianna. Her gentleness—her meek endurance—galled, enraged him: there was one to whom his golden pieces were but as hoarded ashes. Reproach at length subsided into neglect, then turned into disgust; and, when the miser looked upon the dead face of his wife, he smiled in sullen satisfaction. There was an intruding, though a silent, witness taken hence: even in the chamber of

* See Moreri.

the dead, Quattrino breathed more freely. For the child, that should be to him a blessing, he would mould it to his own heart: there was no mother, no Marianna, with her speechless lips, yet cold, accusing eyes, to thwart the lessons of a thrifty father. The girl should wed a prince; yes, he had already gold sufficient,—and time could not but treble it—to buy a throne. Auretta was scarcely three days old when, in the imagination of her parent, vain-glorious, drunk with wealth, she was a royal bride.

Years passed, and every year, Creso Quattrino became more hardened with his wealth. Fortune seemed his handmaid, so constantly did he prosper. His dealings were with men of all nations: he scrupled not to furnish the infidel with arms, heedless of the penalty; for Mother Church denied the Christian rites of burial to such ingrate traders. "It matters not," thought Creso, "so that I *die* rich, I am well content to risk the rest."

"So! where shall we meet to talk of this?" Thus one day spoke Quattrino to Jacob, the travelled Jew of Padua, with whom our Christian merchant was wont to have many dealings.

"Why not at your house, good signor?" asked Jacob. "Ere this, we have driven a bargain there."

"It has been noted: therefore, 'tis fit we deal more privily. Art thou not a Jew?"

"I thank Abraham! yes. I am a branded, despised Jew: I thank Abraham!"

"And I—I am a Christian; is it not so, Jacob?" asked Quattrino, a smile curling his lip.

"I have heard that you were baptised, Signor Quattrino," replied the Jew.

"And our close and frequent communing may damage me in the confessional," said Creso, and still he sneered.

"Thy confessional! Where may that place be found?" inquired Jacob.

"Where I lay by my ducats, Jew. Understand me; our Church hath eyes, and ears, and—hands; and long ones."

"All this I know—all this I have felt," replied the Hebrew.

"This war with the Turk—if 'twere known that thou and I helped the wicked Infidel to cut good Christian throats—dost know what might happen, Jew? Thy bones would crack for it."

"Ugh!" and the Jew shuddered.

"Nay, more and worse; my coin would shrink: the priestly hand—thou knowest how huge its clutch—would be among it. I thank my good god Plutus! the war flourishes. 'Twas a hot fight the last—there are widows wailing in Venice, Jew."

"I thank my God! the God of Abraham, for it!" cried the Jew with deep devotion; "I have cause to hate thy brethren—God knows it!"

"Saidst thou brethren, Jew? To me all men are brethren—'tis the good creed taught me by my gold. Blessed talisman! Glorious property! softening the haughty — strengthening the weak; giving to him, who rightly knows its use, a power and mastery beyond all other might. The Turk bids for my aid: I sell him arms, wherewith he cuts a thousand Christian throats making Christian children fatherless. And why is this? I will tell you. Why is the Christian slaughtered? The goodly, peaceful creature covets a fair patch of earth—a glittering city—the dominion of a stranger's river. He is an infidel who holds it—it is enough; the unbeliever's land is soaked with human blood; the city is besieged—a hell of flames is roaring round its walls—the breach is made; rapine, murder, and lust whoop through the streets——and the flag of victory flies over blood and ashes. The Christians have conquered; and with sweet humility, and deep thanksgiving, they make the church roof echo with a loud *Te Deum!* With brazen face and iron heart, they thank their God, that they have prospered in a work, that devils might have blenched at."

"Do I hear Creso Quattrino, the merchant of Padua?" asked the Jew, looking astonishment.

"These hideous mockeries, good Jacob—this wanton tyranny of the strong—have made me look upon the doings of this world as a grim, fantastic, wicked, foolish mask. Virtue, justice, honour! What are they? Words; tinkling syllables for sweating slaves, like bells to drudging camels. There is but one thing certain—gold! Grasp that—you grasp power; a power, that though the poor may hate, they must acknowledge. Grasp gold, and you pull the heart-strings of that godlike creature, man, as boys work puppets."

"I love my ducats, good Signor Creso; and yet, amongst my own people, there is, I think, something I love more," said Jacob.

"More—more than thy ducats, Jew?" asked Quattrino.

"Aye; the respect of men—their kindly greetings; need I add, the smiles of my children?" said the Jew, and Creso bit his lip.

"The smiles of children!" and as Creso spoke, a sudden desolation stared from his eyes.

"That is a wealth!" cried the Jew; "that is a wealth!"

"Can it be tested?" exclaimed Creso; "tell me, Jacob—tell me, how?"

"You are yourself a father, Signor Quattrino—the father of a beautiful maiden; a thing of goodness, of gentleness."

"Thou didst know her mother, Jacob?" asked the merchant.

"Auretta is her mother's self—her very self," cried the Jew. "'Tis twenty-three years ago—alack! time slides, time slides! But I have tarried long. Where shall we meet to-night, since to thy hearth the Jew brings peril?"

"By the Palazzo de Ragione—by the *Stone*. Humph! See you not, Jacob, that I preach truly? The *Stone of Infamy!* Poverty, at the fount of this world, is christened infamy. Christened, branded with a burning brand. The *Stone of Infamy!* Right—very right,—'tis fitly called; for did a glistening angel sit there, men would loathe it."

"By the *Stone*; good. The hour?" and the Jew prepared to depart. "The hour?"

"Stay: not there. There is thanksgiving at St. Antony's for our victory, for we claim it, over the Infidel; I must be there."

"You, there?" and the Jew gazed and then smiled grimly. "You at the thanksgiving?"

"Aye; being beaten, the Infidel hath greater need of arms. You thank at the synagogue—I at the cathedral. Meet me at nine," and Creso Quattrino turned to seek his solitary home—solitary though a daughter dwelt there. "The mother's self—her very self," he muttered as he took his way—"would she were not so!"

On the marriage of Marianna, Pietro Leti quitted his native Padua for Florence, where he found a wife in the daughter of a thrifty vine-grower, who, dying, bequeathed his son-in-law a small estate; and in a few years Pietro became a prosperous man, with wealth enough to send Luigi, his only child, to study at the school of Padua. It was to give a meeting to the young scholar that the Jew had hastened from Quattrino.

"I have waited, Jacob," said Luigi, with an impatient look, as the old man entered his dwelling.

"I crave your pardon, gentle sir—sudden business with Signor Quattrino held me."

"Ha! Quattrino. Thou knowest him, then? I had heard so. Thou art friends?" added Luigi, earnestly.

"We sometimes trade together—nothing more: our friendship is bounded by our ducats," said the Jew.

"Dost know his daughter — hast ever seen the beautiful Auretta?" and the youth coloured, and his voice trembled.

"Seen her? Aye, a thousand times. Thou mayest have heard thy father speak of her mother?" said the Jew fixing his eyes upon Luigi.

"Auretta's mother? Never. Why should he speak of her?" inquired Luigi, moved by the scrutinising glance of the Jew.

"I 'll tell thee. The story, youth, may haply save thee much misery—may profit the beautiful Auretta."

"Oh, speak! good Jacob—speak!" exclaimed the impatient boy.

"Thy father was to have wedded the mother of Auretta—they were betrothed."

"Betrothed! 'Tis strange I never heard of this. Betrothed! What barred the match?" asked Luigi.

"Poverty. To save her father from the direst shame, poor Marianna became the wife of the rich Quattrino. Her daughter—I have heard the merchant vaunt as much—is destined for a prince."

"A prince!" cried Luigi.

"No less: and be sure of it, young sir, Quattrino's wealth may make even princes stoop to wed Auretta."

"Stoop to wed her—stoop, Jew?"

"But we did not meet to talk of this," said the old Jew, marking the earnestness of Luigi—"we met not for this."

"True. Well, Jew, shall I have the money?" asked Luigi.

"A thousand ducats—and the security?" and Jacob paused, and stared in the face of the scholar. "The security?"

"Thou knowest I am my father's heir. Thou knowest he has no child save me. Draw what bond thou wilt, I am content to sign it."

"Death is a slow pay-master," said the Jew.

"But the surest, Jacob," replied Luigi.

"A thousand ducats? 'Tis a large sum for a scholar! Truly, what need hast thou, a bookman, of a thousand ducats?"

"Say, to spend in a revel—to buy a gondola—to purchase music— a sparkling stone—nay, to cast into the Adriatic,—what matters it to thee? Shall I have the money, or shall I seek a readier merchant?" asked the youth, and he rose to depart.

"Stay, gentle sir—thou shalt have the money. This night at nine—I 'll have the deed prepared."

"Where shall we meet?"

"Here," replied the Jew, and the youth took his way from the house, and, with hurried steps, sought the mansion of Quattrino.

"Blessed St. Mary!" cried Auretta's nurse, as she met Luigi at the door; "my master—know you not he is at home?—should he see you,"——

"Go—say I beg some words with him," said Luigi.

"Are you mad, young master?—Are you mad?"

"Fear not, good nurse—I have conned my lesson; fear nothing. Say, a student craves a meeting with the merchant." The nurse obeyed, and the young scholar stood in the presence of the haughty, purse-proud Quattrino.

"Now, youth," said Creso, "what trade would you drive with me?"

"I would purchase your dearest treasure, Signor Quattrino," replied the simple-hearted youth.

"Aye? thou art young for a merchant. What treasure, child?" asked Creso.

"Thy daughter," answered Luigi; and the old man gasped at the word.

"My daughter? Truly: thou wouldst buy the heiress of Creso Quattrino? Doubtless, thou comest to market with a ducal crown, a countship,—nothing less? Thou wouldst buy my daughter—thou,—a student? but I err—I see, thou art a prince, a noble gentleman, jesting in the bare gown of a poor scholar."

"I am called Luigi Leti," answered the boy.

"Leti!" exclaimed the merchant.

"Son of Pietro Leti, once of Padua, now of Florence. You may have heard of him, Signor Quattrino?"

"And thou dost love my daughter—thou dost love Auretta?" asked Quattrino, waiving an answer.

"And would win her—win her at thy hands," replied Luigi.

"Knows she of this meeting? Doth she sanction thy request—hast thou," asked the merchant, with deep dissimulation, "hast thou her heart? Thou hast? And what—what may Luigi Leti offer a doating father for this priceless gem?"

"The harvest of my sword," answered Luigi.

"Thy sword? A student's sword?"

"Creso Quattrino, my soul abhors deceit: 'tis possible I might have won the jewel of thy house despite thy will."

"Is it so?" cried Quattrino, and his heart laboured with hate—with thoughts of ruthless vengeance. "My daughter would have flown from me—would have wedded with a poor scholar? Thou art a brave, a noble youth, Luigi; thou hast rightly said, thy heart abhors deceit. I read that glad assurance in thine eyes: give me thy hand," and the subtle merchant pressed the palm of Luigi, smiling in his face. "I see thy purpose, youth—thou wouldst not rob an old man of his only joy; thou comest to tell me this?"

"I come to ask a promise," said Luigi.

"Speak; the openness of thy nature hath won me: my heart yearns towards thee, Luigi; trust me, it does. Humph!" and still Creso smiled upon his victim—"thy features make me think

of days, that—well, well, they 're past. How is the good Pietro? He wedded happily—very happily. I have heard much of the virtues of thy good mother. But thou comest to ask a boon? Name it, good Luigi—name it."

"I have closed my book—have thrown aside my student's gown; and in three days take ship from Venice," said Luigi.

"Take ship—whither?" asked the gladdened merchant.

"For the war against the Turk," replied the youth.

"A brave lad! a pious lad! Ha! ha! thou 'lt make rare work among the heathen. 'Tis a pious purpose."

"Wilt thou promise me, Signor Quattrino, if I return to Venice with an honoured name—with glory won upon the infidel—wilt thou promise me Auretta?"

"Thy laurels 'gainst her ducats? Thou 'lt prove a lucky champion, if thou dost compass it."

"Shall I have thy word, Signor Quattrino?" asked Luigi.

"Thou hast her word already—is it not so?" questioned the smiling merchant. "Nay, I warrant me, 'twas not the timid girl who put such hard conditions? Doubtless, Auretta would wed thee, though thou shouldst never cleave a turban?"

"Shall I have thy promise?" pressed the youth.

"Thou hast made me thy friend for ever, Luigi. Like a thief thou mightest have robbed me of my dearest wealth—nay, more, have laughed at the old man thy wit had beggared. Not a gallant in all Padua, save thyself, good Luigi, would have dealt thus openly. Well, simplicity should win simplicity. When dost thou purpose to depart?"

"In three days."

"Thou art equipped then—everything prepared?"

"I have secured the means. At nine to-night I meet Jacob the Jew,"—

"Though an Israelite, an honest man. And he advances thee the means? To-night, at his house?—aye, indeed," said the crafty merchant. "Well, thou must sup with me to-night: say, at ten, good Luigi; then we can talk of Auretta. Thou wilt not fail—nay, I must see thee to the door;" and Quattrino, with well-acted courtesy, attended the duped Luigi to the threshold. As the merchant stood at his door, a messenger from Venice arrived, bearing a letter for Quattrino.

"I pray, signor," said the man, "that it may bring good news—but there are grievous rumours in Venice."

A moment Quattrino glared at the messenger; then hurriedly broke the seal. Another moment, and he staggered like a drunken man. "Gone! lost! sunk!" he screamed, and his face grew livid.

"Signor — good signor!" cried Luigi, grasping the arm of Creso.

"'Tis true, then?" asked the messenger.

"My argosy, — worth a princedom — and sunk!"—groaned Quattrino.

"Say not so, good signor; hope the best," said Luigi.

Quattrino looked as one stunned at Luigi, and then grasped his hand, and with a forced smile, said—"No matter: the loss shall not spoil our supper. Mind—at ten to-night, Luigi; at ten to-night," he repeated, the messenger standing by, "I shall expect you. The news shook me a little—but 'tis over. Remember, Luigi—at ten," and Quattrino, followed by the messenger, turned into his house.

As the clock struck nine, Luigi knocked at the door of the Jew. The deed was speedily signed, and Luigi, with the counted ducats, bade the Jew good night. Ere the Jew could place the deed in his chest, he heard the cries of Luigi and a noise of struggling men. The Jew rushed into the street, when Luigi, making for the house, fell into the old man's arms.

"Holy Abraham! what has happened?" exclaimed the Jew.

"A villain set upon me—I am slain!" cried the youth, and he slipped from the feeble hold of the Jew, and fell dead upon the earth.

The neighbours ran into the street—the watch came up—the Jew was seized on suspicion of the murder, no man save himself being found near the body. His creed was sufficient evidence of his wickedness—he was a Jew, and that of itself was witness against him. His house was ransacked by the officers of justice, and all his papers seized.

"Thou art innocent of the murder?" said the officer; "well, it matters not; thou wilt have work enough to answer for thy treasons."

"I will confess all—everything—but spare my life—let me be saved from torture," cried the Jew; and he tore his beard, and howled in agony, when he beheld the discovered papers proving his correspondence with the agent of the Turk. "I—I was not alone in the bargain,"—exclaimed the Jew—"the Christian merchant — there is proof of it — Creso Quattrino was my partner."

Ere midnight, Creso Quattrino and the Jew Jacob were fast in gaol—prisoners to the state. The assassin, hired by the merchant, had done his work; but the blow that did a murder, helped to reveal a treason.

The wretched Jew was doomed to the wheel—the Christian merchant obtained his freedom, but only with the loss of all his

wealth. He was fined for his treasons to an amount that absorbed his every possession, leaving him a debtor to many, who, in their time, thwarted and oppressed by Quattrino, resolved to revenge themselves of his past tyranny. Quattrino stood in the streets of Padua without a home, without a meal, save at the hands of charity.

"And it is come to this? And I shall die poor,—after all,—a beggar!" he cried, half-resolved to end his miserable life; and then the hope, vain as he thought it, the hope of future fortune, made him bear the load of life—no, he could not die a pauper.

"And now, signor? The five thousand crowns between us—I have need of them," said a creditor to the broken merchant.

"Give me time—a little time, good Battista," solicited the humble Creso.

"Aye, and more than thou hast given to any man: my crowns to-morrow, or the gaol," answered the creditor.

"The gaol! What—a felon debtor! Thou dog—thou cur, that"—

"Is it so?" said the creditor. "Well, then, to-morrow look thou to lie in debtor's straw."

All night Quattrino wandered through the streets. His reason reeled beneath his misery. He passed before the Palazza di Ragione; and as he stood, a monk—who had been to confess a dying man—approached him.

"Blessed St. Antony!" cried the friar, "is it the merchant—is it Signor Quattrino?"

"No. The merchant is dead—I am his ghost, damned to wander where the rich man lived in glory," answered Creso.

"What was thy wealth?—perishable dust! My son, there is better wealth hoarded for thee."

"Where, monk—where?" asked Quattrino.

"Wealth eternal," replied the friar.

"Can'st lend me ten thousand present ducats?" demanded Creso. "Look there! Is not that the *Stone of Infamy?* And now, see,"—and Quattrino griped the arm of the friar,—"see, who stands there and beckons me to it! Dost not see him? Look—'tis young Luigi—he, the scholar, who was slain. He beckons me to sit there: me, Creso Quattrino, the princely merchant of Padua, throned on the *Stone of Infamy!* Ha! ha!" And with a yell, the pauper Creso rushed from the shuddering friar.

The next day, Quattrino encountered Battista. "Now, merchant," said the creditor—"my ducats, my ducats, good Messer

Creso—my ducats, or the gaol. There—for who in Padua hath not felt the bitterness of thy oppression?—there thou shalt rot and die my debtor."

"Die thy debtor! Thy debtor!—a crawling chapman!—thou, who, in my days of wealth, didst cringe before me like a beaten hound?—I defy, and spit at thee!"—exclaimed old Creso.

"Arrest him at my suit; to the gaol with him," cried Battista to a ready officer.

"Hold—hold!" shouted Creso—"I—I claim my privilege—the privilege of a citizen of Padua!"

"What privilege?" asked the officer.

"The—the"—Creso stood convulsed with passion—"I will not die thy debtor—I will sit upon the *Stone!*"

The crowd that were gathered about Creso and his creditor, echoed "the *Stone!*" and looked astonished in each other's faces—and then, as rejoicing at a promised feast, whooped and shouted—"Quattrino on the *Stone of Infamy!*" "Creso a bankrupt!"

The next morning, Creso, the golden merchant, as he was called, became a spectacle of shame and wretchedness to the men of Padua. For one hour he sat upon the *Stone of Infamy!*

"Now, Quattrino, the time is up—thou hast sat the hour—thy debts are paid," said the officer.

"I am no debtor, by the law of Padua?" asked Quattrino, and with an effort he rose from his ignominious seat, and griping the arm of one of the guards with the gripe of death, he looked as one risen from his coffin. "I die no debtor!" he gasped, and fell, huddled, to the earth.

"Santa Maria! he 's dead!" exclaimed Battista.

"Ha! ha! he 's dead!" screamed an old crone.

Ere the beggar Quattrino was borne from the Hall, there was heard a cry of "The argosy! the argosy!"—and a messenger from Venice hurried through the crowd to the self-poisoned criminal. Quattrino's vessel, rumoured as lost, rode in the Adriatic, freighted with unbounded wealth.

"She 's safe!—she 's here!" exclaimed Quattrino, and he writhed with the poison, "in port! safe in port! Ha! ha! I die no pauper—I die"—and, with his eyes glazing upon the messenger of fortune, the miserable Creso "died rich."

THE END.

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